LA Phil

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APRIL 2026

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2025/26 SEASON

WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

performances MAGAZINE

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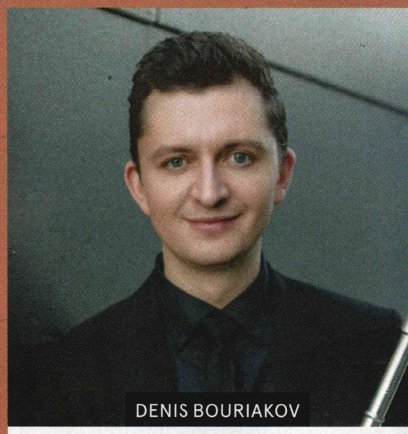
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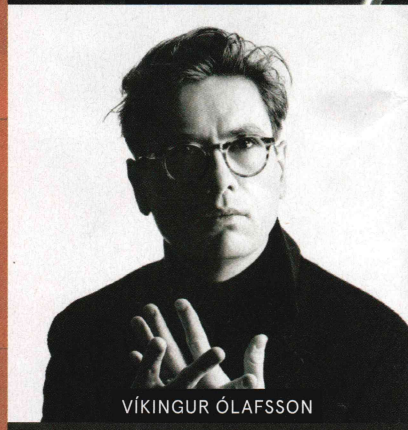
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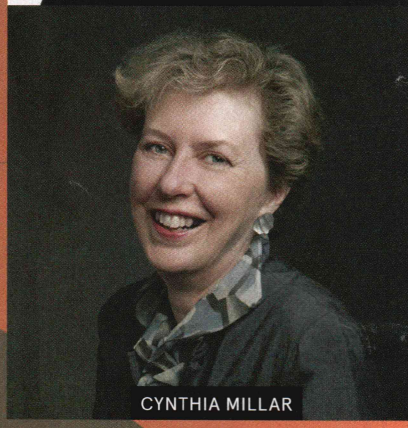
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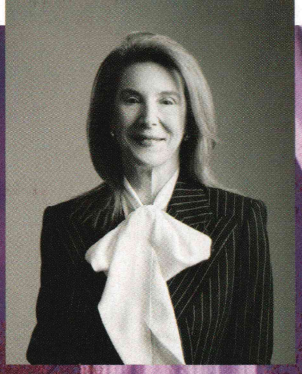

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WELCOME

Thank you for joining us for an exceptional month of music with the LA Phil. Across April, our Body & Sound festival continues its exploration of how music shapes our perception of the world, and vice versa, through a string quartet performed in total darkness, a journey through a sonic and physical landscape in Elysian Park, and a stunning presentation of Olivier Messiaen's towering *Turangalîla-symphonie* conducted by Simone Young.

This month also spotlights many of our dear friends and family on the Walt Disney Concert Hall stage. Principal flutist Denis Bouriakov is featured in Carl Reinecke's concerto for the instrument in a program led by Manfred Honeck, and cellist Alisa Weilerstein and conductor Ryan Bancroft team up for a Shostakovich and Sibelius program.

Both of our Creative Chairs also join us in April. John Adams comes together with Víkingur Ólafsson for a second time this season for John's wickedly delectable piano concerto *Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes?*. And the inimitable Herbie Hancock continues to create new pathways in jazz and beyond.

Music has the power to change us, from the way it stimulates our senses to how it unites us as a community. Herbie noted this, too, when he said, "Music is the tool to express life—and all that makes a difference."

Warmly,

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David C. Bohnett Presidential Chair
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** *From the opening of Walt Disney Concert Hall on October 24, 2003, to present*

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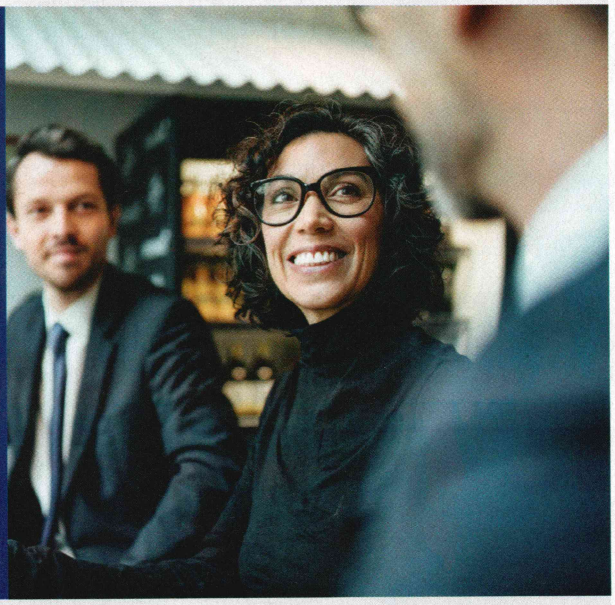

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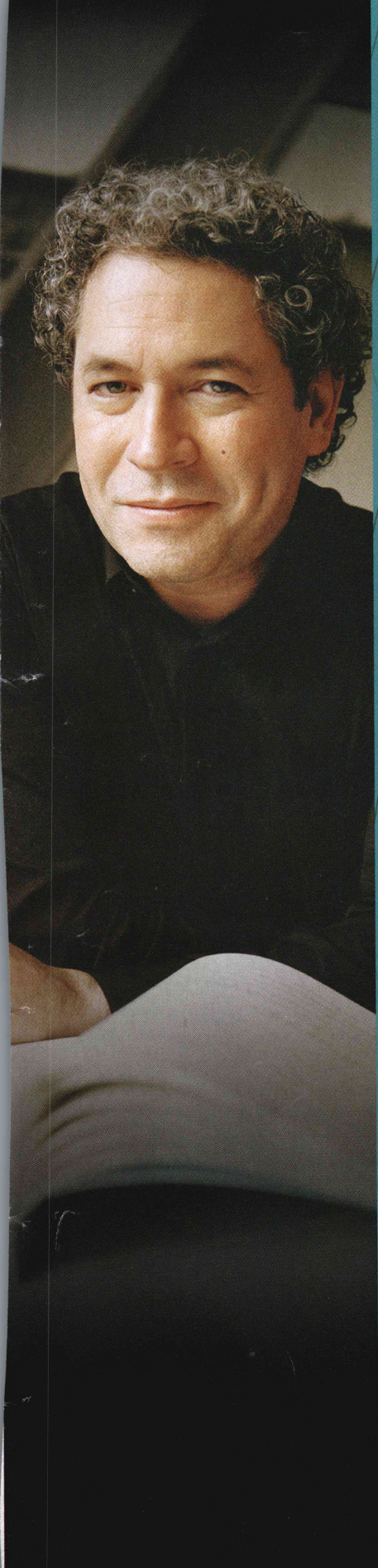

GUSTAVO DUDAMEL

Music & Artistic Director, *Walt and Lilly Disney Chair*

Gustavo Dudamel is committed to creating a better world through music. Guided by an unwavering belief in the power of art to inspire and transform lives, he has worked tirelessly to expand education and access for underserved communities around the world and to broaden the impact of classical music on new and ever-larger audiences. His rise, from humble beginnings as a child in Venezuela to an unparalleled career of artistic and social achievements, offers living proof that culture can bring meaning to the life of an individual and greater harmony to the world at large. He currently serves as the Music & Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela, and in 2026, he becomes the Music and Artistic Director of the New York Philharmonic, continuing a legacy that includes Gustav Mahler, Arturo Toscanini, and Leonard Bernstein. Throughout 2025, Dudamel celebrated the 50th Anniversary of El Sistema, honoring the global impact of José Antonio Abreu's visionary education program across five generations and acknowledging the vital importance of arts education.

Dudamel's advocacy for the power of music to unite, heal, and inspire is global in scope. In appearances from the United Nations to the White House to the Nobel Peace Prize Concert, Dudamel has served as a passionate advocate for music education and social integration through art, sharing his own transformative experience in Venezuela's El Sistema program as an example of how music can give a sense of purpose and meaning to young people and help them rise above challenging circumstances. In 2007, Dudamel, the LA Phil, and its community partners founded YOLA (Youth Orchestra Los Angeles), which now provides more than 1,700 young people with free instruments, intensive music instruction, academic support, and leadership training. In 2012, Dudamel launched the Dudamel Foundation, which he co-chairs with his wife, actress and director María Valverde, with the goal of expanding access to music and the arts for young people by providing tools and opportunities to shape their creative futures.

As a conductor, Dudamel is one of the few classical musicians to become a bona fide pop-culture phenomenon and has worked tirelessly to ensure that music reaches an ever-greater audience. He was the first classical artist to participate in the Super Bowl halftime show and the youngest conductor ever to lead the Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Concert. He has performed at global mainstream events from the Academy Awards to Coachella, and has worked with musical icons like Billie Eilish, Christina Aguilera, LL Cool J, Ca7riel & Paco Amoroso, Laufey, Coldplay, and Nas. Dudamel conducted the score to Steven Spielberg's new adaptation of *West Side Story*, and at John Williams' personal request, he guest conducted the opening and closing credits of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. His film and television appearances include *Sesame Street*, *The Simpsons*, *Mozart in the Jungle*, *Trolls World Tour*, and *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*, and in 2019 Dudamel was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

For more information about Gustavo Dudamel, visit his official website at **gustavodudamel.com** and the Dudamel Foundation at **dudamelfoundation.org**.

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC

The Los Angeles Philharmonic, under the vibrant leadership of Music & Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel, presents an inspiring array of music through a commitment to foundational works and adventurous explorations. Both at home and abroad, the LA Phil—recognized as one of the world's outstanding orchestras—is leading the way in groundbreaking and diverse programming, onstage and in the community, that reflects the orchestra's artistry and demonstrates its vision. The 2025/26 season is the orchestra's 107th.

Nearly 300 concerts are either performed or presented by the LA Phil at its three iconic venues: the Frank Gehry-designed Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, and The Ford. During its winter season at Walt Disney Concert Hall, with approximately 165 performances, the LA Phil creates festivals, artist residencies, and other thematic programs designed to enhance the audience's experience of orchestral music. Since 1922, its summer home has been the world-famous Hollywood Bowl, host to the finest artists from all genres of music. The Ford, situated in a 32-acre park and under the stewardship of the LA Phil since December 2019, presents an eclectic summer season of music, dance, film, and family events that are reflective of the communities that comprise Los Angeles.

The orchestra's involvement with Los Angeles extends far beyond its venues. Among its influential and multifaceted learning initiatives is YOLA (Youth Orchestra Los Angeles). Through YOLA, inspired by Gustavo Dudamel's own training as a young musician, the LA Phil and its community partners provide free instruments, intensive music training, and academic support to over 1,700 young musicians, empowering them to become vital citizens, leaders, and agents of change. In the fall of 2021, YOLA opened its own permanent, purpose-built facility: the Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen YOLA Center at Inglewood, designed by Frank Gehry.

The orchestra also undertakes tours, both domestically and internationally, including regular visits to New York, London (where the orchestra is the Barbican Centre's International Orchestral Partner), Paris, and Tokyo. As part of its global Centennial activities, the orchestra visited Seoul, Tokyo, Mexico City, London, Boston, and New York. The LA Phil's first tour was in 1921, and the orchestra has made annual tours since the 1969/70 season.

The LA Phil has released an array of critically acclaimed recordings, including world premieres of the music of John Adams and Louis Andriessen, along with Grammy-winning recordings featuring the music of Brahms, Ives, Andrew Norman, Thomas Adès, and Gabriela Ortiz—whose *Yanga* recieved three Grammys in 2026.

The Los Angeles Philharmonic was founded in 1919 by William Andrews Clark, Jr., a wealthy amateur musician. Walter Henry Rothwell became its first Music Director, serving until 1927; since then, 10 renowned conductors have served in that capacity: Georg Schnéevoigt (1927-1929), Artur Rodziński (1929-1933), Otto Klemperer (1933-1939), Alfred Wallenstein (1943-1956), Eduard van Beinum (1956-1959), Zubin Mehta (1962-1978), Carlo Maria Giulini (1978-1984), André Previn (1985-1989), Esa-Pekka Salonen (1992-2009), and Gustavo Dudamel (2009-present).

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC

Gustavo Dudamel
Music & Artistic Director
Walt and Lilly Disney Chair

Zubin Mehta
Conductor Emeritus

Esa-Pekka Salonen
Conductor Laureate

[Position vacant]
Assistant Conductor
Ann Ronus Chair

John Adams
John and Samantha Williams Creative Chair

Herbie Hancock
Creative Chair for Jazz

FIRST VIOLINS

[Position vacant]
Concertmaster
Marjorie Connell Wilson Chair

Bing Wang
Acting Concertmaster
Barbara and Jay Rasulo Chair

[Position vacant]
First Associate Concertmaster
Ernest Fleischmann Chair

[Position vacant]
Assistant Concertmaster
Philharmonic Affiliates Chair

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Deanie and Jay Stein Chair

Minyoung Chang
I.H. Albert Sutnick Chair

Tianyun Jia
Jordan Koransky
Ashley Park
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Weilu Zhang

SECOND VIOLINS

Melody Ye Yuan
Principal

Mark Kashper
Associate Principal

Isabella Brown
Assistant Principal

Kristine Whitson
Johnny Lee
Ingrid Chun
Jin-Shan Dai
Miika Gregg
Chao-Hua Jin
Jung Eun Kang
Vivian Kukiel
Nickolai Kurganov
Varty Manouelian
Emily Shehi
Michelle Tseng
Gabriel Esperon*

VIOLAS

Ben Ullery
Principal
John Connell Chair

[Position vacant]
Associate Principal

Jenni Seo
Assistant Principal

Dana Lawson
Richard Elegino
Ingrid Hutman+
Michael Larco
Hui Liu
Meredith Snow
Leticia Oaks Strong
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David Garrett
Barry Gold
Jason Lippmann
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Zachary Mowitz
Serge Oskotsky
Brent Samuel
Keeon Guzman*

BASSES

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Diane Disney Miller and Ron Miller Chair

Kaelan Decman
Associate Principal

Oscar M. Meza
Assistant Principal

David Allen Moore
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Jory Herman
Brian Johnson
Peter Rofé
Matthew Peralta*

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Elise Shope Henry
Mari L. Danihel Chair

Sarah Jackson

Piccolo
Sarah Jackson

OBOES

Ryan Roberts
Principal
Carol Colburn Grigor Chair

Marion Arthur Kuszyk
Associate Principal

Anne Marie Gabriele

English Horn
[Position vacant]

CLARINETS

Boris Allakhverdyan
Principal
Michele and Dudley Rauch Chair

[Position vacant]
Associate Principal

Andrew Lowy
Taylor Eiffert

E-Flat Clarinet
Andrew Lowy

Bass Clarinet
Taylor Eiffert

BASSOONS

Whitney Crockett
Principal

[Position vacant]
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Ann Ronus Chair

Evan Kuhlmann

Contrabassoon
Evan Kuhlmann
Mark Houston Dalzell and James Dao-Dalzell Chair for Artistic Service to the Community

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Jeffrey Strong

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Koni and Geoff Rich Chair

James Miller
Associate Principal
Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen Chair

Paul Radke

Bass Trombone
John Lofton
Miller and Goff Family Chair

TUBA

Mason Soria
Principal

TIMPANI

Joseph Pereira
Principal
Cecilia and Dudley Rauch Chair

David Riccobono
Assistant Principal

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Matthew Howard
Principal

Wesley Sumpter
Assistant Principal

David Riccobono
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The Los Angeles Philharmonic string section utilizes revolving seating on a systematic basis. Players listed alphabetically change seats periodically.

The musicians of the Los Angeles Philharmonic are represented by Professional Musicians Local 47, AFM.

LA Phil

THE 2026/27 Season AT Walt Disney Concert Hall

Minimalist icons, centennial celebrations, superstar recitalists, and world premieres: A sensational 2026/27 season awaits.

With ambitious orchestral programming, icons of jazz and Broadway, and return engagements by beloved collaborators, including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Gustavo Dudamel, Yuja Wang, and Herbie Hancock, the 2026/27 Walt Disney Concert Hall season was announced last month. There's a lot on offer, so we've broken things down to help you navigate all that's coming up. See you at the Hall!

Exploring Ritual with Esa-Pekka Salonen

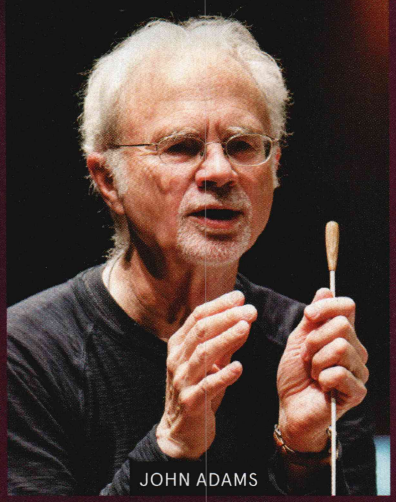
Esa-Pekka Salonen begins his new position as the Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen Creative Director at the start of the 2026/27 season. In his new role, Salonen curates the Rituals festival, which will explore how ritual can lead to transformation in music and in life. The festival includes a pair of ambitious staged productions: Yuval Sharon directs Rituals of the Everyday (**JAN 26**), and director Peter Sellars returns to the Hall for One Morning Turns Into an Eternity (**FEB 5–7**). It also presents a pairing of Mozart's and Ligeti's Requiems (**FEB 11–14**) and a concert of Steve Reich's *Runner*, Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto with Hilary Hahn, and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (MAY 13–16). Additionally, Salonen leads the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a program that explores birdsong in works by the late Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara, Gabriella Smith, and Sibelius (**JAN 29–31**).

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN

GUSTAVO DUDAMEL

Beethoven and more with Dudamel

In December, Gustavo Dudamel and pianist Rudolf Buchbinder kick off a complete cycle of Beethoven's five piano concertos, which culminates in January with conductor Xian Zhang. Each performance pairs one of the composer's works for piano and orchestra with one of his revolutionary symphonies (**DEC 4–6, 10–13**, and **JAN 14–17**). Later in the season, Dudamel leads Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5, Stravinsky's Symphony in Three Movements, and a new work from Canadian composer Zosha Di Castri (**MAY 6–9**)

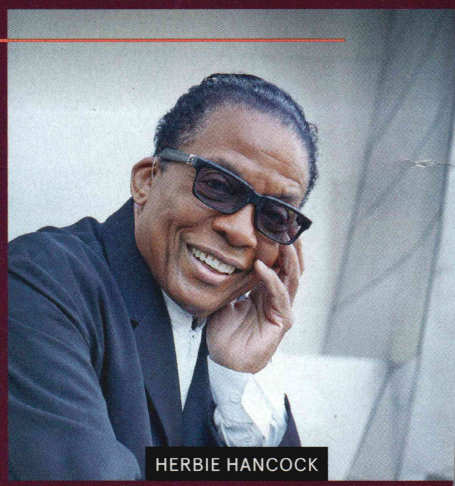

JOHN ADAMS

Minimalist Icons

In honor and celebration of Minimalism's pioneers, the LA Phil is highlighting works associated with the influential movement throughout the year. Three of its major figures have big birthdays during the 2026/27 season: Steve Reich and Philip Glass turn 90 and Creative Chair John Adams celebrates his 80th. As part of the Minimalist Icons festival, the LA Phil New Music Group premieres Dylan Mattingly's *Leaves of Grass* (**FEB 25**); a weekend program finds divinity in works by Arvo Pärt, Górecki, and Pēteris Vasks (**FEB 26–27**); an all-Reich program showcases some of the composer's most striking and gorgeous music (**MAR 7**); Glass' Symphony No. 15 and Violin Concerto No. 1 combine for two mesmerizing evenings (**MAR 12–13**); Meredith Monk & Vocal Ensemble join forces with Wild Up for a staged production of Monk's cosmic *Indra's Net* (**APR 6**); and John Adams conducts selections from his operas (**APR 16–18**).

From Jazz to Pop

Walt Disney Concert Hall is a home for artists across all music genres. As part of the Jazz series, composer and saxophonist Kamasi Washington returns to the Hall for the first time in a decade (**DEC 8**); we honor the 100th birthday of Miles Davis—an artist synonymous with jazz itself, whose musical output traces the development and history of the genre (**FEB 19**); and Creative Chair for Jazz Herbie Hancock brings his one-of-a-kind improvisational vision (**MAR 26**). As part of our Songbook series, Mexican American singer-songwriter Lila Downs takes the stage with "Cambias mi Mundo" (**OCT 30**), and Bernadette Peters closes the season with a bang (**MAY 29**).


HERBIE HANCOCK

YUJA WANG

Dazzling Recitals

In 2026/27, the Colburn Celebrity Recital series expands to 10 concerts with more star-studded performances. After bringing the house down at the 2024 LA Phil gala, Lang Lang returns (**OCT 6**); the superstar trio Lisa Batiashvili, Gautier Capuçon, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet perform chamber music (**OCT 14**); violinist Hilary Hahn, baritone Matthias Goerne, and pianist Yekwon Sunwoo perform a new work by Reena Esmail (**DEC 3**); Hélène Grimaud plays the final piano sonatas of Beethoven and Schubert (**DEC 9**); and longtime recital partners Gil Shaham and Akira Eguchi take the stage (**JAN 17**). The second part of the season sees a staggering parade of keyboard superstars: Víkingur Ólafsson (**FEB 24**), Seong-Jin Cho (**MAR 3**), Daniil Trifonov (**MAR 9**), Evgeny Kissin (**APR 15**), and, capping off the series, none other than Yuja Wang (**APR 22**).

For more information on the full 2026/27 Walt Disney Concert Hall season, visit **laphil.com/2627season**.

HOMECOMING

Esa-Pekka Salonen returns to the LA Phil in the 2026/27 season as the Judith and Thomas L. Beckmen Creative Director. He spoke to us about his new role, his relationship with the orchestra, and his hope to forge a "new art form."

What was it like for you as a young man in your mid-20s to fly to Los Angeles and lead the Los Angeles Philharmonic?
My first concerts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic were also my first time in this country, so it was a culture shock on many different levels. I flew over from Stockholm, and I was taken to a hotel suite. That was the first hotel suite I'd ever been in in my life—it was the piano suite at the Biltmore, so there was a concert grand in one of the rooms. And I thought, "Okay, wow, this is different." That was also my first-ever time in a gym and the first-ever Jacuzzi I saw in my life. It was totally bewildering.

I felt that in some way this orchestra was going to be a huge part of my life for the foreseeable future. And I had no idea how this feeling would manifest itself—or even if it would, in concrete terms—but it felt like home.

You've been a regular here ever since your first appearance. What's your relationship with the orchestra like?
Conducting an orchestra is not a one-way street. You're not conducting the second clarinet or the first horn; you're conducting the people who play those instruments. And to have that kind of knowledge and connection on a personal level makes it a lot more rewarding emotionally because it is not an anonymous transaction. It's more like a real dialogue.

How would you describe your relationship with the audience?
It's a communal experience. The 2,000 people and us onstage, we create something together that cannot ever be repeated in exactly the same way. So that's beautiful, but it's also a bit sad because all that disappears. It leaves a mark, in some cases it changes one's life, but it's gone.

What are you hoping to achieve as Creative Director?
I would love to see, at the end of my tenure, that we produced completely new artworks using the most cutting-edge technology. It sounds a bit grand to say that we would like to create a completely new art form. But what I mean is that I see the use of technology with classical music as a three-prong thing. The first one is the most obvious: Technology can be used for distribution of the material.

And then there's the second prong, which is reimagining existing pieces with the help of technology, like making VR versions of, say, a Mahler symphony or AR experiences of *The Rite of Spring*.

But there's also the third prong, which at this point I find the most fascinating. And that is to create something from the ground up that is completely new, where everything—sound, visuals, spatial distribution—is being created at the same time. That would be the ultimate goal, to use the talent and resources of a top symphony orchestra, and composers, and visual artists of all kinds, and programmers, to have all kinds of people coming together to create something that has never been seen or heard before.

TAKIN' OFF: HOW MILES DAVIS BROUGHT HERBIE HANCOCK TO THE COSMOS

By Sadie Sartini Garner

As the jazz world marks Miles Davis' 100th birthday, Creative Chair for Jazz Herbie Hancock celebrates his mentor, friend, and inspiration.

In 1963, Herbie Hancock got a new gig that would change his life—and jazz history. The great trumpeter Miles Davis, impressed by the pianist's album *Takin' Off*, asked him to join a new group he was assembling. By late 1964, that group would be finalized with the addition of Wayne Shorter on saxophone. Together with bassist Ron Carter and drummer Tony Williams, they'd release a string of legendary studio and live albums that turned jazz into a kind of cubist music—you could recognize every shape, but the way they fit together was always unexpected. They'd be known forevermore as the Second Great Quintet, and their creative spirit still resonates well beyond the world of jazz.

Miles Davis was born 100 years ago, on May 26, 1926, in Alton, IL. Over the next year, as music fans around the globe celebrate his centennial, both Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Hollywood Bowl will pay tribute with special concerts dedicated to his music. On February 19, 2027, an all-star group will come together at Walt Disney Concert Hall for a night of interplay and virtuosity that shows the depth and emotional resonance of Miles' music. And on August 19, Herbie himself will fete his former boss, mentor, and friend at the Bowl. (He also performs at Walt Disney Concert Hall this spring, on April 14.) As it is with any time Herbie steps onto a stage, you can expect him to travel far and wide. With the music he and Miles made together as a starting point, you can go just about anywhere.

"Miles really encouraged all his musicians to reach beyond what they know, go into unknown territory and explore," Herbie said. And that's exactly what the Second Great Quintet did right from the beginning. The group had jelled quickly, with the players able to anticipate one another's changes on a nearly molecular level. That level of chemistry had its drawbacks, though. "We'd gotten so cohesive as a band that it had become easy to play together. We had

figured out a formula for making it work, but of course playing by formula was exactly the opposite of what we wanted to do. We needed to put the challenge back in, to figure out ways to take more risks."

By the time they arrived in Chicago for a two-week stand at the Plugged Nickel for the 1965 holiday season, they had found a way. On the flight over, Williams suggested to the other sidemen that they play "anti-music," or the exact opposite of what might sound "right" or expected in a given moment. Here was the trick: They'd do it without telling the boss what they were planning. The recordings made over those two weeks show them taking apart familiar standards and classics from Miles' catalog. They forced one another into odd corners, challenging Miles to keep up and recontextualize songs he'd played hundreds of times.

If that seems cruel, they were only following Miles' directives. Early in their stint together, Miles leaned over to Herbie during a performance and said, "Don't play the butter notes." Or so Herbie thought. What were the butter notes? Herbie had no idea, but decided that because butter is fat, Miles must have been telling him to avoid excess notation. Herbie dutifully cut the root note from his chords, which opened his playing and allowed him a new level of freedom. It wasn't until decades later, talking to another musician, that he learned Miles had told him to avoid "the bottom notes"—the very roots Herbie had snipped from his playing. In a bit of magical serendipity, he'd arrived at the right place via an odd route, a neat encapsulation of everything jazz is supposed to be.

Even after the Second Great Quintet dissolved, Herbie and Miles continued to work together, making forward-thinking music that greatly broadened jazz's horizons. With its starry-eyed keyboards, very gradual development, and orderly sense of possibility, *In A Silent Way* is considered by some to be one of the first-ever ambient records, its 1969 release preceding Brian Eno's *Ambient 1* by a full decade. The heavy jazz-rock of *Jack Johnson*, which was recorded as a soundtrack to a documentary about the titular boxer, followed two years later. And in 1972, *On the Corner* would bring together the heady pop-funk of Sly and the Family Stone with methods straight from the mind of experimental composer Karlheinz Stockhausen for a knotty, hard-edged form of jazz-funk that still sounds fresh over 50 years later.

This open-ended approach, and the desire to pursue interesting sound even if it led beyond jazz's borders, would inform the rest of Herbie's career. In 1971, he'd form Mwandishi, one of the most out-there and experimental groups jazz had ever seen at that point, playing a form of cosmic synthesizer music that seemed beamed in from another planet. The year after *On the Corner*, Herbie broke up Mwandishi and started Headhunters, the supremely funky group that would make him a superstar; their debut, *Head Hunters*, became the best-selling jazz album of all time and Miles found himself in the unusual position of opening shows for his protégé.

Working with Miles Davis would ultimately be one of the most profound experiences of Herbie Hancock's life. "I was always frightened playing with Miles," he told the BBC with a laugh. "It was very intimidating. I always wanted to be at my best, because I admired him so much." But that fear pushed him to greater heights. "It was fear on one hand," he added. "On the other hand, it was exciting. And when things were at their best, it was really inspiring."

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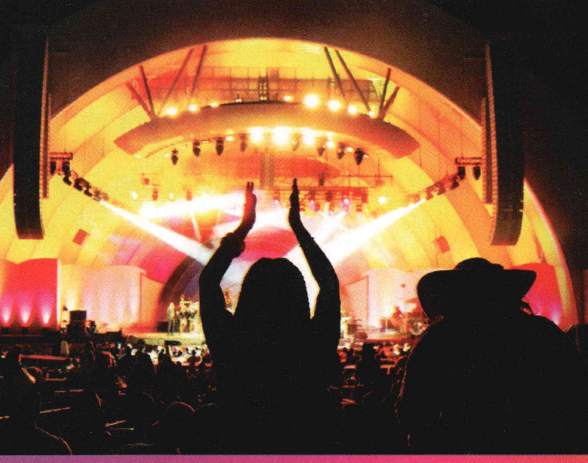

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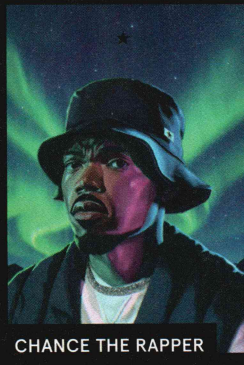

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The fare at Hojokban and, below, its beef tartare.

SEOUL FOOD

New Hojokban elevates the South Korean street fare known as pochas. by Jenn Tanaka

It's a rainy evening in downtown Los Angeles. We ask our server for advice. She suggests her favorite dish, perilla noodles. Chilled noodles on a cold night? We order them. The buckwheat noodles, swirled with jalapeño slices and a seaweed chiffonade, are fantastic—simple, refined, balanced.

The dish exemplifies how the cooks at Hojokban, new in the Arts District, have re-envisioned pocha-style street food and South Korean comfort food.

The restaurant's name is inspired by a small Korean dining table whose legs are carved to resemble a tiger, traditionally reserved for special gatherings. Hojokban has locations in Seoul and New York.

"Hojokban may not always be entirely traditional, but it is always authentic," says Einstein Park, director of operations, "a reflection of how Korean cuisine continues to evolve in a modern context.... Classic flavors with playful twists."

Salmon ssambap suggests an oceanic jewel box. It brims with cubes of orange-pink salmon mixed with a fermented-soybean-paste, slabs of fresh uni and a generous scoop of caviar. A vibrant Korean beef tartare in a sesame-soy dressing arrives with thin lotus root chips.

Korean bar food is an inspiration.

Crispy shredded potatoes mimic a crunchy hash brown; the savory pancake is finished

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Salmon ssambap at Hojokban and, left, the dining room.

with a snowy mound of micro-planed Parmigiano and drizzled with black truffle aioli. Honey-fried chicken sounds like late-night takeout but comes dotted with pumpkin seeds and chilies.

Virtually everyone orders the showstopping hojok galbi, tender soy-glazed beef short ribs decorated with red Fresno chile slices and crushed roasted peanuts. The meat is sliced off the bone and plated with the Flintstone-sized rib beneath.

The ramyeon fried rice is also hugely popular. It's no secret that spicy South Korean instant noodles are among the key ingredients; the bacon-laden rice is playfully plated with the container.

To fully appreciate Hojokban, it helps to understand pochas.

At night, the streets of Seoul spring to life as street vendors set up shop under colorful tarpaulins. One moment, salaried workers are strolling out of offices, the next the sidewalks are lined with charcoal grills, tanks filled with fresh seafood, and patrons enjoying soju shots. The scene begins at dusk and vanishes by the morning commute.

The vendors are called pocha or pojangmacha. They inspired the HAND Hospitality restaurant group to launch Hojokban, one of 20 concepts that also include Atoboy, Jua and boutique dessert shop Lysée in Manhattan. Next door in L.A., sibling concept Cafe Knotted—huge in Korea, with 40 locations—sells cream- and custard-filled donuts.

At Hojokban, the meal finishes with a complimentary treat: Melona gelato bars.

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Ryan Bancroft, conductor
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SUNDAY
APRIL 19 2PM

SHOSTAKOVICH
Compiled and arranged by ATOVMYAN

Selections from Suite for Variety Orchestra No. 1 (c. 14 minutes)
- March
- Lyric Waltz
- Dance I
- Waltz I
- Finale

SHOSTAKOVICH

Concerto No. 2 for Cello and Orchestra, Op. 126 (c. 33 minutes)
- Largo
- Allegretto
- Allegretto

Alisa Weilerstein

INTERMISSION

SIBELIUS

Lemminkäinen Suite, Op. 22 (c. 48 minutes)
- Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island
- The Swan of Tuonela
- Lemminkäinen in Tuonela
- Lemminkäinen's Return

These performances are generously supported by the **Elaine and Bram Goldsmith Great Artists Fund.**

Ryan Bancroft's appearance is generously supported by **Julia Kalmus and Abe Lillard** (APR 19).

Programs and artists subject to change.

LA Phil
GUSTAVO DUDAMEL
MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

AT A GLANCE

The great cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich was one of Shostakovich's closest friends and working colleagues. Both of the composer's cello concertos were written for Rostropovich, who gave the premiere of the Second Concerto in 1966 on his friend's 60th birthday. It is a characteristically multifaceted work, powerfully brooding in the opening movement, wry street music in the middle, and kinetically aggressive in the finale.

Rostropovich also conducted the first known performance of Shostakovich's Suite for Variety Orchestra No. 1, in London in 1988, 13 years after the composer died. The eight short movements were arranged—recomposed in places—by Levon Atovmyan (another of Shostakovich's close associates), using mainly cues from Shostakovich's film scores. "Variety" orchestra here means a show or theater orchestra, including saxophones, accordion, and guitar.

Sibelius' *Lemminkäinen* Suite was born in 1896 from the thematic ashes of an abandoned opera project and revised twice, including reordering the movements. These are tone poems depicting legends from the *Kalevala*, the Finnish folkloric epic, featuring the hero Lemminkäinen. There is only a loose narrative here, but colorful and allusive sonic atmospheres abound. These are mercurial and athletic in the outer poems, distinctively Northern and bardic in the middle ones—particularly in the famous English horn solo representing the mystical swan of Tuonela.

—John Henken

SELECTIONS FROM SUITE FOR VARIETY ORCHESTRA NO. 1

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–75)

Compiled and arranged by Levon Atovmyan (1901–73)

Composed: c. 1956–59

Orchestration: 2 flutes (2nd=piccolo), oboe, 2 clarinets, bassoon, 2 alto saxophones, 2 tenor saxophones (1st=soprano saxophone), 3 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, suspended cymbal, snare drum, triangle, tambourine, glockenspiel, xylophone, vibraphone), 2 pianos (2nd=celesta), harp, guitar, accordion, and strings

First LA Phil performances.

That Dmitri Shostakovich had a natural flair for comedy may come as a surprise to those who know him only from his austere, tragic, and haunted later symphonies. Especially in his early years, Shostakovich enjoyed a reputation as a wit and prankster. While a student at St. Petersburg Conservatory in the 1920s, he earned badly needed money by playing piano accompaniment for silent movies at a local cinema—many of them American comedies. But management let Dima go when he repeatedly stopped playing to look and laugh.

This early cinema experience served Shostakovich well. Between 1929 and 1970, he wrote scores for almost 40 films in a variety of genres, from the eccentric silent feature *The New Babylon* to hard-core Stalinist propaganda docudramas like *The Fall of Berlin* to probing versions of *Hamlet* and *King Lear*.

Many of these scores were compiled into suites or recycled in other compositions. Shostakovich's longtime friend and colleague Levon Atovmyan, a composer and arranger of Armenian origin born in Soviet Turkmenistan, undertook much of that work. One of Atovmyan's most popular arrangements is the eight-part Suite for Variety Orchestra No. 1, which combines excerpts from Shostakovich's scores for four different films (three of them comedies) released between 1937 and 1956. The "variety" in the orchestration comes from the inclusion of instruments associated with a dance band—four saxophones, guitar, and accordion—creating a casual, circus-like atmosphere.

Atovmyan's arrangements take considerable liberties with Shostakovich's original versions, enlarging their length and orchestrations.

Three of the numbers heard in this performance (March, Waltz I, Finale) come from the music for a short madcap film, *The Adventures of Korzinkina*, released in November 1940. Korzinkina, a well-meaning railroad station ticket clerk, takes pity on a hapless singer (played by a well-known circus clown) who dreams of appearing at the local theater. He succeeds only after considerable backstage shenanigans and slapstick pratfalls.

Only the opening March appeared in the finished film. On screen, this vivacious and irresistible theme-and-variations accompanies the actors' floundering attempts to escape from a malfunctioning turntable revolving at increasingly hilarious speed. Neither the charming Waltz I, with its crooning saxophone duet and folksy accordion flavor, nor the rousing Finale, similar in style to the opening March, made the final cut.

Shostakovich scored numerous films directed by the famous team of Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, including the Maxim trilogy, a story of political intrigue set around the time of the Russian Revolution. The Lyric Waltz—written for *The Return of Maxim* but not included in the final cut—establishes an atmosphere of casual elegance, with prominently featured solos by the four saxophones, two pianos, and accordion.

The most frequently performed and recorded of Shostakovich's film scores was written for *The Gadfly* (1955), a tale about Italian revolutionaries set in the 1830s and 1840s. In Dance I (originally called "National Holiday" or "Folk Feast"), Shostakovich invokes Italian folk color with brilliant 16-note runs, tambourine flourishes, syncopated rhythms, and brass fanfares, perhaps paying tribute to Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien*. **—Harlow Robinson**

CONCERTO NO. 2 FOR CELLO AND ORCHESTRA, OP. 126

Dmitri Shostakovich

Composed: 1966

Orchestration: piccolo, flute, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 3 bassoons (3rd=contrabassoon), 2 horns, timpani, percussion (bass drum, snare drum, slapstick, woodblock, tambourine, tom-tom, xylophone), 2 harps, strings, and solo cello

First LA Phil performance: December 30, 1971, Zubin Mehta conducting

Both dedicated to the same soloist, the composer's soulmate Mstislav Rostropovich (1927–2007), Dmitri Shostakovich's two cello concertos are as different as champagne and vodka. Completed in 1959, the First boasts a wildly extroverted, showy, and bubbly personality. The Second, finished around Shostakovich's 60th birthday in 1966, shares the darker, more introspective mood of the intellectually dense music of his later years.

In a letter to his friend Isaac Glikman dated April 27, 1966, written from a sanatorium in Crimea where Shostakovich was resting after a stressful concert schedule, he described his progress.

"Since this work has no literary text or program, I find it difficult to write anything about it. In scale it is large and has three movements. The second and the third are performed without a pause. In the second movement and in the climax of the third a theme very similar to the popular Odesa street vendors' song *'Kupite bubliki'* [Buy our pretzels] appears. I couldn't begin to explain what provoked me to do this. But it's really very similar. As I was composing I was, of course, thinking about the magnificent M. Rostropovich. I'm counting on him to perform it."

Rostropovich readily agreed. Yevgeny Mravinsky, who had led the premieres of most of Shostakovich's symphonies with the Leningrad Philharmonic, was scheduled to conduct. But shortly before the concert Mravinsky canceled. His relationship with the composer had soured after he declined to conduct the premiere of the controversial 13th Symphony, "Babi Yar," a few years earlier. Shostakovich's choral setting of Yevgeny Yevtushenko's poem denouncing German and Russian anti-Semitism had infuriated Communist Party officials and scared Mravinsky off.

So the concerto's premiere took place not in Leningrad but in the friendly confines of the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, with Rostropovich joining Yevgeny Svetlanov and the USSR State Symphony Orchestra in a festive concert held on the composer's birthday—September 25, 1966.

CONTINUED

Initially, Shostakovich thought of the concerto as a symphony with a solo cello part but decided to expand the cello's role. The writing for the soloist stresses unusual sonic effects rather than virtuosity and blends with the orchestral texture in chamber-like ensembles featuring unlikely combinations of instruments. Small motifs and melodic ideas flow and bend through mood-changing transformation and disfiguration.

Slow and moderate tempos dominate. The first-movement Largo opens with a cello solo, an ominous phrase revolving around a descending minor second, then quietly and extensively developed by the strings, with assistance from harp and horns. "One would think that there is nothing special about the way Shostakovich orchestrates the opening; just cello and low strings," said Rostropovich. "But in real physical sound the effect is quite amazing."

When the xylophone, harp, and woodwinds enter, the mood turns playful and sardonic, a macabre merry dance. The first of the concerto's two daunting cadenzas follows, a quirky duet for the soloist and bass drum that creates stunning tension in timbre, register, and atmosphere. The bassoon restates the first theme, leading to a recapitulation of the two themes, dark and light, in the cello part, restoring the reflective, almost liturgical mood that prevailed at the outset.

Infectious and increasingly frenzied treatment of the Odesa ditty "Buy our pretzels" dominates the second movement. Shostakovich's use of this urban folk tune recalls similar moments in the symphonies of Mahler, whom Shostakovich admired for his mastery of emotional and contextual contrast. The ironic atmosphere invades the opening measures of the third movement, announced by a cockeyed fanfare from the horns setting the stage for the second cadenza. Here, the soloist negotiates knotty double-stopped intervals of fourths across three strings before the slithering tambourine enters for a weird duet.

A short baroque-style motif ending in a trill for the soloist serves as a serene unifying idea in the finale, clashing in cinematic montage-like structure with sections of frenzied gaiety. With a grotesque reprise of the pretzel song, the violence increases, punctuated by terrifying slaps of the slapstick. But the prevailing pensiveness soon reasserts itself.

In the final pages, Shostakovich again turns to the large percussion section for eerie and somber effects: Against a long-held bass note D in the solo part, the wood block, tom-tom, snare drum, and xylophone beat out a quiet but insistent patter. Like a clock winding down, it delivers a birthday message of mortality. **—H.R.**

LEMMINKÄINEN SUITE, OP. 22

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Composed: 1893–96; rev. 1897, 1939

Orchestration: 2 flutes (2nd=piccolo), 2 oboes (2nd=English horn), 2 clarinets (2nd=bass clarinet), 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, suspended cymbal, tambourine, triangle, snare drum), harp, and strings

First LA Phil performance: April 19, 1991, Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting

The *Lemminkäinen* Suite is a collection of four symphonic poems, written originally between 1893 and 1896, revised several times, and published as a whole in 1954. Three of the poems are based on a legend from the *Kalevala* that depicts the adventures of Lemminkäinen, the most thoroughbred male shaman in Finnish narrative poetry. The fourth symphonic poem, *The Swan of Tuonela*, originates from an overture Sibelius wrote for his opera *The Building of the Boat*, a work that had foundered. Musical ideas drafted for the opera seem to have ended up in other movements of the suite as well.

The sequence of the four movements of the *Lemminkäinen* Suite does

not follow the unfolding of events in the *Kalevala*, which means that Sibelius, in the spirit of Liszt, used the poetry loosely for the sake of inspiration and atmospheric effect, reimagining it in purely musical terms. Nonetheless, the suite progresses as follows.

Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island: In the first episode, "Lemminkäinen, full of joyance, Handsome hero, Kaukomieli," chased by the folks of Pohjola, leaves his parental home, sails to the open sea, and arrives at the shore of an island. "Then the minstrel, Lemminkäinen, Roamed throughout the island-hamlets, To the joy of all the virgins, All the maids of braided tresses." Thematically, this first movement corresponds to Richard Strauss' *Don Juan* (1889).

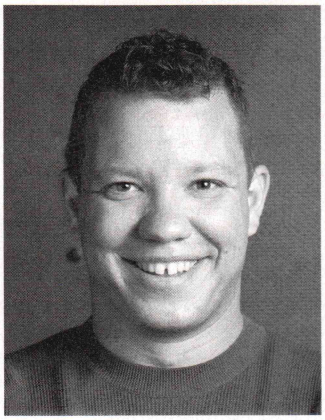
The Swan of Tuonela: Sibelius set the scene for the second part, writing in the score: "Tuonela, the land of death, the hell of Finnish mythology, is surrounded by a large river of black waters and a rapid current, in which the swan of Tuonela glides majestically, singing."

Lemminkäinen in Tuonela: Lemminkäinen proposes to the daughter of Louhi, mistress of Pohjola. Louhi assigns him three tasks to solve, the last one being to hunt the swan from Tuonela's river that separates the world of the living from the world of the dead. But before Lemminkäinen sees the swan, a shepherd kills him, dismembers him, and throws his body into the river. Told about the death of her son, Lemminkäinen's mother sets off to look for him, collects his remains from the river, puts them together, and revives him.

Lemminkäinen's Return: This final episode of the suite was based on rune 30 in the *Kavela*, describing the title character's heroic return to "his tender mother."

Though the suite has a vague narrative throughline, we can consider the *Lemminkäinen* Suite an expression more of absolute music than programmatic; and the individual poems roughly correspond to the movements of a symphony: "Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island" to a sonata allegro, "The Swan of Tuonela" to a slow movement, "Lemminkäinen in Tuonela" to a scherzo, and "Lemminkäinen's Return" to a rondo finale. But unlike movements of a symphony, each poem feels complete on its own, played without the others.

In Finnish art, the 1890s was a decade of Symbolism and Art Nouveau. The Symbolist movement laid emphasis on immediate and personal expression in contradistinction to the objective world of Realism and Naturalism. The aesthetics of Art Nouveau opposed the rigidity of Classicism and relied on the imitation of natural forms, especially those of plants and animals. The *Lemminkäinen* Suite is the most important manifestation of these currents in Finnish music. Its symbolism stems from the mythical world of the *Kalevala*, and its techniques—instability of harmony, a musical line that flows freely and rhapsodically but still obeys strict inner discipline, and an exceptionally rich network of almost unnoticeable associative developments—have striking similarities to the principles of Art Nouveau. **—Ilkka Oramo**



RYAN BANCROFT

Raised in Los Angeles, conductor Ryan Bancroft has rapidly built an international career that takes him all over the globe to work with many of the world's leading orchestras. Since September 2021, Bancroft has been Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. In September 2023, he became Chief Conductor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic. He also holds the position of Artist in Association with the Tapiola Sinfonietta in Finland.

After opening his tenure as Chief Conductor in Stockholm with the orchestra's first performance of Sandström's *The High Mass*, Bancroft continued his first two seasons with performances of Mahler and Bruckner symphonies alongside world premieres by Chrichan Larson and Zacharias Wolfe, while working with renowned soloists including Emanuel Ax, Leif Ove Andsnes, Maxim Vengerov, and Víkingur Ólafsson. In 2025/26, Bancroft continues to pair important Swedish composers such as Stenhammar, Pettersson, and Tebogo Monnakgotla, with established works in the classical canon by Prokofiev, Berlioz, and Shostakovich.

In August 2023, Bancroft returned to LA to make his debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. His appearances this weekend with the orchestra at Walt Disney Concert Hall follow his critically acclaimed debut at the Hall in April 2025. Elsewhere in the US, he makes his debuts with the St. Louis, Houston, and New World symphony orchestras, following recent successful debuts with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, and Dallas Symphony Orchestra. He has close relationships in Canada with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

Also this season, Bancroft debuts with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican with Clara-Jumi Kang and with the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo with Thomas Hampson. He continues his relationships with orchestras such as the Philharmonia, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, and Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse. In recent seasons, he has led the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin at the Berlin Philharmonie, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, and Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León.

Since his success at the prestigious Malko Competition for Young Conductors in 2018, where he won both First Prize and the Audience Prize, Bancroft has conducted a number of other leading European orchestras including the BBC Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Danish National Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, and RAI National Symphony Orchestra in Turin.

ALISA WEILERSTEIN

The 2025/26 season sees Alisa Weilerstein perform concertos with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Staatskapelle Berlin, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, Philharmonia Orchestra, and The Cleveland Orchestra, alongside Alan Gilbert, Rafael Payare, Alain Altinoglu, Paavo Järvi, and Marin Alsop. She also brings her *Fragments* project—a six-part sequence of music combining Bach's Cello Suites with 27 newly commissioned works, accompanied by production, staging, and lighting design—to Europe for the first time, including to the Southbank Centre as part of her residency there.

Highlights of the previous two seasons have included performances with the Berliner Philharmoniker, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Detroit Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, and Gewandhausorchester, as well as world premieres of concertos by Thomas Larcher, Richard Blackford, and Gabriela Ortiz with the New York Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic, and Los Angeles Philharmonic, respectively.

A recipient of the MacArthur "genius grant" Fellowship, Weilerstein performs at the world's top venues and festivals, including Carnegie Hall, the Verbier Festival, the Aldeburgh Festival, Severance Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Kennedy Center, and the Tanglewood Festival. She regularly collaborates with musicians such as Franz Welser-Möst, Gustavo Dudamel, Lahav Shani, Karina Canellakis, Ryan Bancroft, Daniel Harding, Joshua Weilerstein, Leonidas Kavakos, Kirill Gerstein, and Inon Barnatan. Weilerstein records for Pentatone.

Beethoven & Schumann

Members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic

TUESDAY
APRIL 21, 2026 8PM

Valerie COLEMAN — *Rubispheres* (c. 15 minutes)
DROM
Serenade
Revival
Catherine Ransom Karoly, flute
Andrew Lowy, clarinet
Evan Kuhlmann, bassoon

R. SCHUMANN — Piano Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 47 (c. 33 minutes)
Sostenuto assai—Allegro ma non troppo
Scherzo: Molto vivace
Andante cantabile
Finale: Vivace
Mark Kashper, violin
Leticia Oaks Strong, viola
Jason Lippmann, cello
Lucy Nargizyan, piano

INTERMISSION

BEETHOVEN — String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat major, Op. 130 (c. 45 minutes)
Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro
Presto
Andante con moto, ma non troppo
Alla danza tedesca: Allegro assai
Cavatina: Adagio molto espressivo
Finale: Allegro
Melody Ye Yuan, violin
Miika Gregg, violin
Ben Ullery, viola
Dahae Kim, cello

Programs and artists subject to change.

LA Phil
GUSTAVO DUDAMEL
MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

AT A GLANCE

Urbane 21st-century evocations preface two core monuments of the Central European tradition on this characterful program rich in tunes. Valerie Coleman's *Rubispheres*, for woodwind trio, has the kinetic insouciance of Gershwin on steroids in its outer movements (dedicated to Manhattan's bustling Lower East Side) and something of his sensuous "Summertime" lyricism in the middle serenade (Washington Heights at night).

Ravishing slow movements are also the heart of Robert Schumann's Piano Quartet in E-flat and Beethoven's String Quartet No. 13. The Schumann piece was written to feature stellar pianist Clara Schumann (Robert's wife), but it is the cello that takes the lead in the haunting Andante cantabile.

"Soul" can suggest many moods and modes of expression, and Coleman's and Schumann's slow movements are each soulful in different ways. But as an adjective for music, "soulful" might have been invented for the Cavatina of Beethoven's 13th String Quartet. That is music of profoundly inward exploration and acceptance, paradoxically dreaming yet alert, thoroughly organic yet wonderfully crafted. Both the Schumann and the Beethoven pieces are high-energy works in the main, but their big moments of sublime reflection linger long in musical memory. **—John Henken**

RUBISPHERES

Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)

Composed: 2012

Rubispheres is a series of suites written for various combinations and voices that depict urban life and landscapes of the world. The first suite of the series features wind trio (flute, clarinet, and bassoon), with outer movements that were written for selected virtuoso members of Imani Winds, each composed over the course of five years. The first movement, entitled **DROM**, was written first and was named after a bar on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where a local new-music organization invited me to perform on its annual "Composers Play Composers" marathon. The movement starts with a traditional form of communication called "call and response" between bassoon solo and the entire ensemble. This call-and-response notion carries throughout the movement in a playful fanfare between flute and clarinet, ending strong with all instruments sounding off together in their extreme registers. The second movement, **Serenade**, was written last and was intended to break up the intense groove energy of the outer movements. The piece, however, developed in quite an unusual way. As a new mother, I found that composing while caring for my newborn presented quite a challenge. It was in that moment while stressing out over writer's block and deadlines when infant Lisa began to wail out of need for attention. While comforting her in one arm, I felt tenderness for her in that moment suddenly created a headspace of unexpected serenity that allowed me to finish the movement—in one sitting with my free hand. Serenade is a lullaby dedicated to Lisa Naomi Page. The final movement, **Revival**, draws a parallel between the discovery of creative energy with the fervor of old Southern baptisms held down by the river. There is a spiritual renewal that occurs within a revival, full of shouts and dancing; the vigorous riffs and "punk-tuations" drench the old-school memory with a modern youthful sound. As doublings leap and shift within the orchestration of a simple composite melody, I felt motivated to reshape and mold the often negative narrative of woodwind chamber music into one that is relevant to today; a sound that is nontraditional, substantial, virtuosic, and ALIVE! **—Valerie Coleman**

PIANO QUARTET IN E-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 47

Robert Schumann (1810–56)

Composed: 1842

After composing primarily for the piano until 1840, the year of his marriage to Clara Wieck, Robert Schumann turned to the writing of song, and only after the outpouring

of emotions into some 120 vocal pieces did he make his first serious move into the symphonic realm, producing two symphonies in 1841.

Having taken on the full orchestra, Schumann turned to chamber music in 1842. In quick succession starting in June, he turned out three string quartets, a piano trio, a piano quintet, and the present piano quartet; both the quartet and quintet are in the key of E-flat major. The father bestowed distinct identities upon each of his E-flat chamber children, and if the quintet emerged as the grander of the two, the quartet is still a splendid specimen.

The work opens with a brief, slow introduction, which reappears twice in altered form during the course of the movement and which contains a four-note motif that is the basis of the Allegro's main theme. This melody, along with a more energetic idea beginning with an ascending minor-key scale figure, dominates the movement. The Scherzo that follows, all staccato vigor and rushing fantasy imagery, is interrupted by two contrasting trios, each of these shot through with the Scherzo's impetuosity. The movement ends with a whispered echo of the first trio.

The slow movement offers one of Schumann's most achingly romantic melodies. This theme embodies the 19th century's longing and unrest with its major and minor sevenths reaching upward and then falling sighingly. Toward the end of this Andante, the cello is instructed to tune its lowest string, a C, down to B-flat so that in the final measures it can provide a pedal bass in octaves of the tonic of the key. During these measures, the theme of the last movement is previewed softly and at a slow tempo in the manner of Schumann's literary alter ego, the poetic dreamer Eusebius; when the theme fully emerges in the Finale, it is set forth with the vigor of Eusebius' opposite, the volatile Florestan.

This main theme—a falling fifth and an ascending sixth followed by 16th-note figures—is treated fugally and later set into sharp contrast to more lyrical material. At movement's end, three of the thematic ideas are combined ingeniously, a fourth theme returns fleetingly, and the work concludes with great thrust, with the piano continuing to play the dominant role it has been allotted. **—Orrin Howard**

STRING QUARTET NO. 13 IN B-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 130

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Composed: 1825

Beethoven's last string quartets have been dissected and analyzed endlessly. His contemporaries—even fine and sympathetic musicians—professed extreme degrees of bafflement and horror before them.

With time, the horror has become awe and the quartets are loved for what they are (deeply probing explorations of musical craft and human expression) rather than feared for what they are not (easily understood exponents of period conventions).

The Quartet No. 13 was composed in 1825 and premiered in March 1826. It had an exceptionally large finale, the Grosse Fuge (Great Fugue), which proved technically daunting and conceptually puzzling at the time. In fall 1826, Beethoven replaced it with a shorter and lighter finale, the last piece he would complete before his death a few months later.

Reduced to its barest bones, the quartet would seem well within contemporary expectations. It has a big, serious opening movement with a solemn introduction, vigorous dance and lyrical slow movements in the middle, and a dashing finale. Except that the conventional slow introduction pops back in unexpectedly at odd times throughout the main body of the opening movement to dislocating effect, making restoring formal order part of the narrative arc.

Then there are two dance and two slow movements in the middle, giving the whole quartet six movements instead of the usual four. All of the inner movements are extraordinary examples of their kind. The Presto is a fleet whisper of a ghost dance; the Andante is a marvel of interlocked, interactive construction; the Danza tedesca (German dance) is one of subtle wit; and the sublime Cavatina is widely acknowledged as one of the pinnacles of Beethoven's art, and of human creativity globally; it was the last piece on the Golden Record of music and languages that were sent into space on the Voyager probes as representative of Earth in 1977. **—John Henken**

MIIKA GREGG

Miika Gregg joined the first violin section of the Los Angeles Philharmonic in July 2017, after serving as a member of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra for six seasons. Born in Finland and raised in Boston, Gregg studied under Boston Symphony violinist Aza Raykhtsaum before attending Indiana University, where he studied under Koichiro Harada and Ik-Hwan Bae.

CATHERINE RANSOM KAROLY

Catherine Ransom Karoly joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic as second flutist in May 1996. In October 2000, she made her solo debut with then-Music Director Esa-Pekka Salonen conducting the LA Phil in Ibert's Flute Concerto. She was appointed Associate Principal Flute by Salonen in March 2009.

MARK KASHPER

Born and raised in St. Petersburg, Russia, Mark Kashper started taking violin lessons at the age of 5. In 1978, Kashper arrived in the US as a refugee and three months later won an audition to become a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He became the orchestra's Associate Principal Second Violin in May 1986.

DAHAE KIM

Cellist Dahae Kim joined the LA Phil as Assistant Principal in 2016. Previously, she served as Assistant Principal Cello of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. She was a featured soloist with the DSO in the Benjamin Lees Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra led by Leonard Slatkin.

EVAN KUHLMANN

Evan Kuhlmann was appointed contrabassoon of the LA Phil by Gustavo Dudamel in 2018, shortly after completing his 12th season as Assistant Principal Bassoon and contrabassoon of the Oregon Symphony. The native Seattleite is a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy and The Juilliard School.

JASON LIPPMANN

Cellist Jason Lippmann joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic during the 2004/05 season, after five years as a member of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. He has been active as a chamber and solo musician. Lippmann received his Bachelor of Music from the Manhattan School of Music.

ANDREW LOWY

Andrew Lowy joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic as second/E-flat clarinet in 2014, having previously served for four seasons as Principal Clarinet of the North Carolina Symphony, a position he was awarded at the age of 22 while pursuing graduate studies at the USC Thornton School of Music.

LUCY NARGIZYAN

Lucy Nargizyan has been featured as a soloist and collaborative pianist throughout the United States, England, Wales, Austria, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Canada, Mexico, and Russia. Her performances were broadcast on Russian Radio and Television as well as on Classical KUSC radio.

LETICIA OAKS STRONG

Violist Leticia Oaks Strong joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1994. Strong graduated from USC in 1994 as the Outstanding Graduate of the School of Music and won a position in the Philharmonic later that year.

BEN ULLERY

Praised by the *Chicago Tribune* for his "febrile intensity," violist Ben Ullery enjoys a multifaceted performing career as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral player, and educator. In 2026, he was chosen by Music & Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel for the position of Principal Viola of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

MELODY YE YUAN

Melody Ye Yuan, a distinguished Canadian violinist, joined the first violin section of the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2024 and now serves as Principal Second Violin. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the New England Conservatory and a Master of Music degree from the Colburn Conservatory of Music.

Ichiko Aoba
with 12 Ensemble

Ichiko Aoba
12 Ensemble

FRIDAY
APRIL 24, 2026 8PM

Programs and artists subject to change.

LA Phil
GUSTAVO DUDAMEL
MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

ICHIKO AOBA

Since Ichiko Aoba's 2010 debut, *Razorblade Maiden*, the Japanese singer-songwriter-multi-instrumentalist has released seven albums, founded her independent label hermine, and performed in a growing list of territories worldwide. Her music, often composed on just her classical guitar or a simple synthesizer, is simultaneously intimate and boundless, fragile and unyielding, virtuosic and understated.

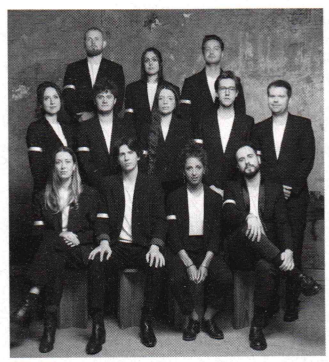
Her seventh album, *Windswept Adan* (2020), introduced lush orchestral arrangements to create a "soundtrack for a fictional film" that took the world by storm. From TikTok to internet music forums, *Windswept Adan* revealed the breadth of Ichiko Aoba's worldwide appeal. Yet her live performances are often stripped-down affairs—guitar and voice, unadorned—that still manage to captivate and enthrall audiences.

Last year saw the release of her eighth album, *Luminescent Creatures*, a work that developed the musical and thematic motifs of *Windswept Adan* while incorporating more sparse arrangements, much like her early albums. Acclaimed by critics and embraced across both traditional media and digital communities, the record marked a new peak in her career.

The album sparked a two-year world tour that has included iconic stages such as London's Royal Albert Hall, the Sydney Opera House, and Walt Disney Concert Hall, with some performances incorporating up to 11 musicians onstage.

Alongside her albums and tours, Ichiko Aoba's creativity spans many fields: radio, narration, and film composition. Her soundtrack for *Amiko* (2022) received Best Soundtrack at the 77th Mainichi Film Awards, and she was honored with the ANCHOR Award at the 2023 Reeperbahn Festival.

At the heart of it all, Ichiko Aoba's music remains a space of stillness and imagination—inviting listeners into worlds both real and dreamed.



12 ENSEMBLE

Evolving from a close-knit group of like-minded musicians into one of Europe's leading string orchestras, the 12 Ensemble has developed an international reputation as an influential collective, reaching audiences worldwide with powerful musical experiences.

Flexible in size without ever sacrificing a deeply collaborative approach, the core formation brings together 12 of London's leading string players. Formed in 2012 by Artistic Directors Eloisa-Fleur Thom and Max Ruisi, the 12 Ensemble is an orchestra led by its artists. Over the past decade, the group has become synonymous with extraordinary performances alongside fiercely unique and innovative programming, combining its dedication to core classical repertoire with exceptional new commissions and collaborators from a broad range of artistic spheres.

Artists-in-Residence at the Wigmore Hall from 2023 to 2025, the 12 Ensemble is in demand internationally. The 2024/25 season saw the group perform at leading venues including the Royal Opera House, Barbican, Royal Albert Hall, and De Doelen (Rotterdam), as well as make its fourth appearance at the BBC Proms. The group released its critically acclaimed third album, *Metamorphosis*, in March 2024, with the record reaching No. 4 on the US Billboard chart. The album features Richard Strauss' *Metamorphosen* for 23 Strings alongside works by Claude Vivier, Oliver Leith, and Edmund Finnis. Its previous album, *Death and the Maiden* (2020), enjoyed significant international success and has been streamed over 20 million times to date.

The group also champions new music and regularly commissions and collaborates with leading composers.In 2025 the group premiered works by Oliver Coates, Tom Coult, Isabella Gellis, and Sasha Scott.

John Adams & Víkingur Ólafsson

Los Angeles Philharmonic
John Adams, conductor
Víkingur Ólafsson, piano

SATURDAY
APRIL 25, 2026 8PM

SUNDAY
APRIL 26 2PM

PIAZZOLLA arranged by John ADAMS
Selections from *Three Tangos* (c. 11 minutes)
- Oblivion
- Libertango

John ADAMS
Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes? (c. 28 minutes) (LA Phil commission with generous support from the Lenore S. and Bernard A. Greenberg Fund)
- Gritty, Funky, but in Strict Tempo; Twitchy, Bot-Like
- Much Slower; Gently, Relaxed
- Più mosso: Obsession / Swing

Víkingur Ólafsson

INTERMISSION

STRAVINSKY
Song of the Nightingale (c. 23 minutes)
- Introduction (Presto): The Feast in the Palace of the Emperor of China
- Chinese March
- Song of the Nightingale: The Two Nightingales
- The Mechanical Nightingale: Illness and Recovery of the Emperor of China

PROKOFIEV
Lieutenant Kijé Suite, Op. 60 (c. 22 minutes)
- The Birth of Kijé
- Romance
- Kijé's Wedding
- Troika
- The Burial of Kijé

These performances are generously supported by the **Contemporary Initiatives Fund** and **Christian Stracke.**

Programs and artists subject to change.

LA Phil
GUSTAVO DUDAMEL
MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

AT A GLANCE

In writing his deliciously titled piano concerto *Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes?*, John Adams admitted to including a "tongue-in-cheek wickedness" in the piece. The same could be said of this entire program overseen and conducted by Adams, which seems to have been cleverly assembled with a nudge and a knowing wink.

The first half dances through Adams' arrangements of Piazzolla's dangerously seductive nuevos tangos before leading into his groovy piano concerto with soloist Víkingur Ólafsson. It's the second pairing of the composer and pianist at Walt Disney Concert Hall this season, following their performance of Adams' most recent piano concerto, *After the Fall*, written explicitly for Ólafsson.

On the second half, Adams layers in the sly humor of two of Russia's most astute composers. Stravinsky's *Song of the Nightingale* sets a fairy tale about how beauty and art cannot be controlled or mechanized, and Prokofiev's bitingly satirical *Lieutenant Kijé* Suite is distilled from the composer's score for an absurdist film about an administrative mistake and the comedic lengths to which bureaucrats obscure it. **—Amanda Angel**

SELECTIONS FROM THREE TANGOS: "OBLIVION" AND "LIBERTANGO"

Astor Piazzolla (1921–92)

Arranged by John Adams (b. 1947)

Composed: 1974; 1982

Orchestration: 2 flutes (2nd=piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, timpani, vibraphone, piano, harp, and strings

First LA Phil performances.

A student of Alberto Ginastera and Nadia Boulanger and a prolific composer in a wide range of styles and media, Piazzolla is best known for his tangos. A master of the bandoneon, Piazzolla in his 20s played with the popular Aníbal Troilo Orchestra and the Carlos Gardel Cinema Orchestra. After his study with Boulanger, he formed the Octeto Buenos Aires and then the Quinteto Tango Nuevo, which became his primary medium of expression for three decades.

Asked once to define the "new tango," Piazzolla offered this equation: "Nuevo tango = tango + tragedy + comedy + whorehouse." His sophisticated tangos advanced the genre while remaining firmly rooted in—indeed, encompassing—its history, including related forms such as the milonga, the traditional song genre from which the Argentinean tango emerged. **—John Henken**

MUST THE DEVIL HAVE ALL THE GOOD TUNES?

John Adams

Composed: 2018

Orchestration: piccolo, 2 flutes (2nd=piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets (2nd=clarinet in A), bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, percussion (almglocken, bass drum, snare drum), honky-tonk piano (detuned upright), bass guitar, strings, and solo piano

First LA Phil performance: March 7, 2019, Gustavo Dudamel conducting

Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes? is John Adams' third piano concerto. He explains that the title "came from an article about Dorothy Day in a very old copy of *The New Yorker*.... [W]hen I saw the phrase 'Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes?' I thought to myself, 'That's a good title just waiting for a piece.' The phrase suggested a 'Totentanz,' only not of the Lisztian manner, but more of a funk-invested American-style." Adams points out that the origin of the phrase has been attributed to Martin Luther and various 18th- and 19th-century theologians.

While the concerto is in one continuous movement, its three seamlessly connected sections follow the traditional fast-slow-fast format. Piano and orchestra begin in the bass register, with a gospel-like riff (marked "Gritty, Funky"). Even with a steady groove, the meter of 9/8 divides into an even 4/4 plus one

extra eighth-note punctuation, providing an off-kilter lurch. The texture thickens and rises and gathers momentum with a perpetual-motion variation of the theme (marked "Twitchy, Bot-Like," with echoes of Mancini's *Peter Gunn* theme), with the piano joined ominously by a detuned honky-tonk piano. Diverging from its tonal center, the piano writing becomes wilder and more chromatic and is shadowed by the orchestra, with blurts of brass echoing sharp, accented chords. The zigzagging chromatic lines recall another musical devil, Ligeti's *L'escalier du diable* (Étude No. 13), with its infinite ascendance à la M.C. Escher.

After a series of questioning chords in dialogue between piano and orchestra, the second section emerges with suspended strings over the delicately ornamented piano solo. Its serenity is deep but fleeting, with the restless piano part exploring a leaping melody. (Adams says that this section was inspired by the lyrical playing of Yuja Wang, who premiered the work.)

The transition to the third section is barely noticeable, as gentle pulsing gives way to a rocking 12/8 rhythm, marked "Obsession / Swing." The virtuosity and playfulness here are familiar from other Adams finales, with the interplay between rollicking syncopation, chirping woodwinds, off-beat accents of brass, loping stride bass, a battery of percussion, and a brilliantly energetic piano part ranging across the entire keyboard, which, after three mysterious, brief interruptions of a held octave D in the orchestra, propels the concerto to a boisterous close. **—Sarah Cahill**

SONG OF THE NIGHTINGALE

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

Composed: 1917

Orchestration: 2 flutes (2nd=piccolo), 2 oboes (2nd=English horn), clarinet, E-flat clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbal, snare drum, tam-tam, tambourine, triangle), 2 harps, celesta, piano, and strings

First LA Phil performance: January 22, 1957, Eduard van Beinum conducting

The Nightingale is Igor Stravinsky's first opera, commissioned by the Moscow Free Theater in 1908. Its libretto, based on a Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale, was written by the composer in collaboration with Stepan Mitusov. In his autobiography, Stravinsky wrote, "This work was greatly encouraged by my master [Rimsky-Korsakov], and to this day I recall with pleasure his approval of the preliminary sketches.... It grieves me that he was never able to hear them in their finished form, for I think he would have liked them." The death of Rimsky-Korsakov occasioned the first of numerous interruptions that would delay completion of *The Nightingale*.

The second came as a consequence of a commission from Sergei Diaghilev for Stravinsky to orchestrate two Chopin piano pieces for inclusion in the ballet *Les Sylphides*. Then, in the summer of 1909, Diaghilev asked Stravinsky to compose *The Firebird* ballet score, which made the composer's name. And then came *Petrushka* (1911) and *The Rite of Spring* (1910–13).

The opera languished, and the composer's style had radically changed from that with which it was begun. "I feared that in view of my new manner, the subsequent scenes would clash with Act I. I informed the directors of the Free Theater of my misgivings and suggested that they be content with Act I alone, presenting it as an independent lyrical scene. But they insisted upon an entire opera in three acts, and ended by persuading me."

But as the third act was nearing completion, news reached Stravinsky that the Moscow Free Theater had gone bankrupt. Finally, Diaghilev presented the completed work at the Paris Opera in May 1914, with Pierre Monteux conducting.

Three years later, Stravinsky suggested that he write a "symphonic poem," which Diaghilev could use as a ballet score if he so desired, and the impresario agreed. The symphonic poem was completed at Morges, Switzerland, at the end of 1917. But due to wartime difficulties, the first performance was delayed until the end of 1919, and then as a concert piece. The ballet version, with choreography by Léonide Massine and scenery and costumes by Henri Matisse, premiered a year later in Paris.

The opera and symphonic poem's lengthy scenario is divided into three parts preceded by an introduction. The following description is adapted from the Andersen fairy tale:

The Feast in the Palace of the Emperor of China
The palace of the Emperor of China was festively adorned. The walls and the floor, which were of porcelain, gleamed in the rays of a thousand golden lamps. The most glorious flowers, which could ring like little bells, had been placed in the passages. There was a running to and fro and a constant draft that made the flower-bells ring.

Chinese March
The Emperor and his courtiers entered to the march.

Song of the Nightingale: The Two Nightingales
The Nightingale (solo flute, then solo violin), seated on its golden perch, sang so gloriously that tears came to the Emperor's eyes. Envoys arrived from the Emperor of Japan with the gift of a mechanical nightingale. The artificial bird, of silver and gold, was wound up and began to sing (piccolo, flute, oboe). Its tail moved up and down. Its song found as much favor with the Emperor as that of the real Nightingale, and it was handsomer. But where was the real Nightingale now? No one had noticed that it flown through an open window. It returned to its friend, the Fisherman, who sang for joy at its arrival (a gentle trumpet solo).

The Mechanical Nightingale: Illness and Recovery of the Emperor of China
The poor Emperor could scarcely breathe. He opened his eyes and saw Death sitting on his chest. All around, from the folds of the splendid curtains, strange heads peered forth. They were the Emperor's deeds, both good and bad. The mechanical bird refused to sing. Then the live Nightingale was heard singing outside the window, and even Death was entranced by its song. Death departed, floating through the window as a white mist. The Emperor fell into a deep slumber from which he awoke fresh and restored. The courtiers, expecting to find their Emperor dead, were astounded when he bid them good morning. The Nightingale had flown back to the Fisherman, who is heard singing his song once more. **—Herbert Glass**

LIEUTENANT KIJÉ SUITE, OP. 60

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Composed: 1934

Orchestration: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, tenor saxophone, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, cornet, 3 trombones, tuba, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, sleigh bells, tambourine, triangle), piano (=celesta), harp, and strings

First LA Phil performance: January 5, 1939, Otto Klemperer conducting

Prokofiev's score for the film *Lieutenant Kijé* was particularly meaningful to him. It was the first music he composed upon returning to his Russian homeland in 1933 after a 10-year residency in Paris that had made him, in his own words, "restive, and afraid of falling into academism"; and it was his first effort in the film medium.

Prokofiev's biting humor and penchant for the grotesque were tailor-made for the satiric story of *Kijé*, which evolves from an incident of Hollywood-type madness: Through a wildly unlikely mistake, a nonexistent Lieutenant Kijé has been entered into the rolls of a military company, and to prevent official embarrassment, a Kijé is invented. The film chronicles the Lieutenant's arrival, promotion, marriage, and burial.

Prokofiev made a five-movement symphonic suite based on the film music, revising the original orchestration considerably by adding instruments including a cornet and a saxophone to produce a more colorful, "visual" score.

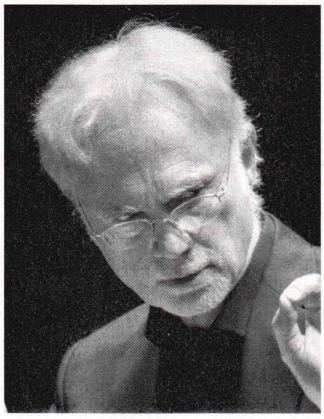
The Birth of Kijé
A distant cornet call announces the arrival of Kijé, followed by other flourishes, such as those for drum and piccolo, that confirm the satiric mood and military setting.

Romance
Love enters Kijé's life.

Kijé's Wedding
The festivities are both sentimental and boisterous, the main themes being wonderfully tipsy and endearing. Did the ceremony take place in a tavern?

Troika
The Russian horse-drawn transportation is suggested in the accompaniment to a typical tavern song.

The Burial of Kijé
The soldier's demise brings reminiscences of his (imaginary) life and a wistful, touching, final farewell. **—Orrin Howard**



JOHN ADAMS

Composer, conductor, and creative thinker—John Adams occupies a unique position in the world of music. His works stand out among contemporary classical compositions for their depth of expression, brilliance of sound, and the profoundly humanist nature of their themes. His operas and oratorios such as *Nixon in China*, *Doctor Atomic*, and *El Niño* have transformed the genre of contemporary music theater. Spanning five decades, works such as *Harmonielehre*, *Shaker Loops*, *The Dharma at Big Sur*, and his Violin Concerto are among the most performed of all contemporary classical music.

As a conductor, Adams has led the world's major orchestras, programming his own works with a wide variety of repertoire ranging from Beethoven, Mozart, and Debussy to Sibelius, Ives, Carter, Glass, and Ellington. Among his honorary doctorates are those from Yale, Harvard, Northwestern, and Cambridge universities and from The Juilliard School. A provocative writer, he is author of the highly acclaimed autobiography *Hallelujah Junction* and is a frequent contributor to *The New York Times Book Review*. Since 2009 Adams has been Creative Chair of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

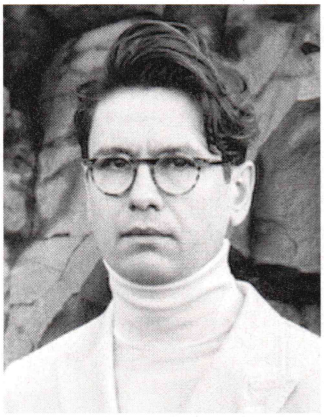
Born and raised in New England, Adams learned the clarinet from his father and played in marching bands and community orchestras during his formative years. He began composing at age 10, and his first orchestral pieces were performed while he was still a teenager. After graduating from Harvard University, he relocated to California, where he has lived ever since. In 2019 he was the recipient of Spain's BBVA Frontiers of Knowledge award and Holland's Erasmus Prize "for notable contributions to European culture, society and social science," and in 2021 he was appointed Honorary Academician by the General Assembly of the Academicians of Santa Cecilia. He received the 2021 Ditson Conductor's Award from Columbia University in recognition of his "exceptional commitment to American composers."

Adams' conducting engagements in 2025/26 include return visits to the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Houston Symphony, with frequent collaborator Víkingur Ólafsson; The Cleveland Orchestra; and New World Symphony. Farther afield, he also returns to the Gothenburg Symphony, Sinfonia Lahti, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony, and Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería in Mexico City and conducts multiple concerts with the Hallé orchestra across a three-day festival of his music.

Recent conducting appearances include the New York Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, and the Metropolitan Opera for the American premiere of his most recent opera, *Antony and Cleopatra*. A five-time Grammy winner, Adams conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic on the Nonesuch recording of his opera *Girls of the Golden West*, which received a 2024 Grammy nomination, his 15th, for Best Opera Recording.

In salute of Adams' 75th birthday in 2022, Nonesuch Records released the 40-disc *John Adams Collected Works*, a box set of recordings spanning more than four decades of the composer's career with the label. Also available as a box set is the Berliner Philharmoniker's *John Adams Edition*, a CD and DVD collection comprising seven of his works, conducted by Simon Rattle, Gustavo Dudamel, Kirill Petrenko, Alan Gilbert, and Adams.

The official John Adams website is **earbox.com**.



VÍKINGUR ÓLAFSSON

Víkingur Ólafsson is one of the most celebrated classical artists of our time, a unique and visionary musician who brings his profound originality to some of the greatest works in music history. His recordings resonate deeply with audiences around the world, reaching over 1 billion streams and winning numerous awards including the 2025 Grammy for Best Classical Instrumental Solo for his album of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, *BBC Music Magazine* Album of the Year, and Opus Klassik Solo Recording of the Year (twice). Other notable honors include the Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medal, Rolf Schock Music Prize, Gramophone's Artist of the Year, Musical America's Instrumentalist of the Year, the Nordic Council Music Prize, and Order of the Falcon (Iceland's order of chivalry), as well as the Icelandic Export Award, given by the president of Iceland.

November 2025 saw Ólafsson present his latest album, *Opus 109,* which places Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 30, Op. 109, at its heart. In an illuminating and thrilling musical dialogue with Schubert, J.S. Bach, and other works by Beethoven, it traces the lineages that converge on this masterpiece of the piano literature. He tours the anticipated new program widely, bringing it to the greatest concert halls across Europe and North America.

Ólafsson opened the 2025/26 season and toured the US with the Philharmonia Orchestra as Featured Artist, and he returns to the Berlin Philharmonic with Semyon Bychkov and the Czech Philharmonic with Antonio Pappano. He reunited with John Adams and the Los Angeles Philharmonic for performances of *After the Fall,* a concerto written expressly for him. Ólafsson marks the György Kurtág centenary celebrations in 2026 and appears as artist in residence at Cal Performances in Berkeley and at Müpa, Budapest.

Alexandre Kantorow

Alexandre Kantorow, piano

TUESDAY
APRIL 28, 2026 8PM

LISZT Variations on a motif by Bach: Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen (c. 17 minutes)

MEDTNER Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 5 (c. 30 minutes)
- Allegro
- Intermezzo: Allegro
- Largo divoto
- Finale: Allegro risoluto

INTERMISSION

CHOPIN Prelude in C-sharp minor, Op. 45 (c. 5 minutes)

RACHMANINOFF Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 28 (c. 38 minutes)
- Allegro moderato
- Lento
- Allegro molto

Programs and artists subject to change.

This series is generously supported by the **Colburn Foundation.**

LA Phil
GUSTAVO DUDAMEL
MUSIC & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

AT A GLANCE

Tonight, Alexandre Kantorow reaches for the sublime in pieces by Liszt and Chopin and two sonatas by Russian composers. From the opening movement of Medtner's Sonata in F minor, it's easy to hear that he and Rachmaninoff were contemporaries; the dense layering of sound, lighting-quick finger work, and heavy chords are signatures of their styles. In the third movement, Medtner, whom Rachmaninoff once called "the greatest composer of our time," sifts through knotted chord progressions that mutate as they repeat. Rachmaninoff's First Sonata—composed four years after Medtner completed his F-minor Sonata—closes the program swinging between wild agitation and serene contemplation.

Liszt's Variations on Bach's "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen," or "Weeping, Lamenting, Worrying, Fearing," opens the concert. At times, Liszt's take on the cantata strikes a sunnier chord, with moments of playfulness and surprise, but it keeps a fraught turbulence at its core. Chopin's final prelude offers a bridge between the ambitious Russian works with its slow, moody evocations. **—Tess Carges**

VARIATIONS ON A MOTIF BY BACH: WEINEN, KLAGEN, SORGEN, ZAGEN

Franz Liszt (1811–86)

Composed: 1862

In February 1847, Franz Liszt met Princess Carolyne von Sayn-Wittgenstein while giving concerts in Kyiv. Already separated from the husband to whom she had been married when only 17, von Sayn-Wittgenstein fell in love with the pianist, who was also at a personal crossroads. Weary from almost a decade of constant touring, Liszt completed some further engagements and then abandoned the public concert stage as a pianist, staying with von Sayn-Wittgenstein on her Ukrainian estate from the fall of 1847 until January 1848, when the couple left for Weimar.

Years before, the Grand Duke Carl Alexander had offered Liszt the post of Kapellmeister-in-Extraordinary, which Liszt's relentless touring precluded accepting. Now Liszt wanted to devote himself more to composition. Weimar offered him an orchestra and an opera house, and a kindred spirit in the Grand Duke, with whom Liszt hoped to create an "Athens of the North." This dream went unfulfilled, but Liszt wrote some of his finest music during the 13 years he spent in Weimar.

In Weimar Liszt found himself particularly close to the spirit of J.S. Bach, who had lived and worked in the city more than a century before for Duke Wihelm Ernst, a direct ancestor of Carl Alexander. Many of Bach's organ works were published for the first time in 1844, and among the earliest works that Liszt completed in Weimar were transcriptions for piano of six of Bach's Preludes and Fugues for organ.

The Variations on "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen" is another Bach-inspired work, one that began as a relatively simple prelude for solo piano in 1859. When Liszt's daughter Blandine died in 1862 he expanded the prelude into an extended elegy, a set of 30 variations using the sinking chromatic line much as Bach would have in a passacaglia, a Baroque form of continuous variation.

Liszt incorporates some of the soprano part of Bach's chorus in a syncopated form in the sixth variation, after which he begins a free elaboration, leading to a central section of more extroverted technical display. After the demonstrative 30th variation, a wayward recitative ushers in the chorale tune from the final movement of the cantata, "Was Gott tut, das ist wohl getan" (What God Does Is Done Well). So, like the cantata, Liszt's variations reverse the sighing sorrow of their beginning, ending with hopeful affirmation. **—John Henken**

CONTINUED

PIANO SONATA IN F MINOR, OP. 5

Nikolai Medtner (1880–1951)

Composed: c. 1895–1903

Nikolai Medtner was steeped in Russia's late-Romantic musical culture from childhood. Born in 1880, he began his piano studies at age 6 and graduated from Moscow Conservatory with top honors in 1900, eight years after his fellow composer-pianist Rachmaninoff. A few years later, he abandoned a promising career as a touring virtuoso and teacher to focus on composition. His extensive catalog of works—all written for the piano, either solo or in ensemble—include 14 sonatas, three concertos, and dozens of short character pieces, plus assorted chamber works and more than 100 songs. Deeply conservative in both his musical aesthetics and his social outlook, Medtner opposed the Bolshevik regime and left Russia for good in 1921; he spent the last years of his self-imposed exile in London, pining for the homeland that had turned its back on him.

Medtner's musical language was fully developed by the turn of the 20th century, when he composed the Sonata in F minor, and changed but little thereafter. It was grounded in a Romantic conception of harmony and form, which he considered essentially synonymous. "Form (the construction of a musical work) is harmony," Medtner wrote. "Every musician who wants to penetrate into the mystery of musical construction will find himself standing before the closed door of any (even the simplest) construction, if he does not have the necessary key—the fundamental sense of harmony." Despite their characteristically turbulent chromaticism, the first and last movements of the Op. 5 Sonata are securely anchored in F minor. A no less important structural element is Medtner's use of recurring motifs, such as the descending six-note melody that serves as the second theme of the opening sonata-form Allegro. (Listen for it again in the Finale, which consists almost entirely of material presented earlier in the sonata.) The air of spiritual unease that haunts the portentous, march-like Intermezzo is partly dispelled by the religious intensity of the ensuing slow movement, marked *divoto* (devout). **—Harry Haskell**

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PRELUDE IN C-SHARP MINOR, OP. 45

Frédéric Chopin (1810–49)

Composed: 1841

For Frédéric Chopin, preludes were not precursors to larger works—they were small pieces, typically between 30 seconds and five minutes, that could stand on their own and had a distinct mood and melodic arc. Chopin completed 26 preludes in his lifetime. The first, later deceivingly labeled No. 26, was composed in 1834 and, at around a minute long, flies by with assured momentum. From 1836 to 1839, Chopin composed his best-known preludes, Opus 28: a set of 24 preludes covering every key signature, beginning in a C-major storm that echoes the gusto and brevity of his first and culminating in a glimmering, D-minor Allegro appassionato.

Two years after the publication of Opus 28, Chopin composed his final prelude, in C-sharp minor, Opus 45. Unlike the previous works, which can shade and preface one another when

played as a set, Opus 45 stands alone—its solitude enhancing a dreamlike, somber tone. Chopin composed it in 1841 in Nohant, France, during a prolific summer that saw the composition of his Ballade in A-flat major, the Opus 48 Nocturnes, and the Fantasy in F minor.

The piece creeps along wistfully like a rivulet, its chromatic ebbs making subtle tides. When he sent the score to the publisher, Chopin modestly labeled it "well modulated." With each of Chopin's Opus 28 preludes rooted strongly in (or at least identified by) its key signature, it's noticeable how unmoored Opus 45 is from C-sharp minor. The left hand slinks into new keys so slyly and gracefully that it never disturbs or disorients the listener. The right hand peppers in gentle chords and legato phrases, following its rebellious counterpart. The cadenza disrupts the flow and frantically unravels—a sudden whirlpool before the somber calm returns, flickers, and fades. **—T.C.**

SONATA NO. 1 IN D MINOR, OP. 28

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

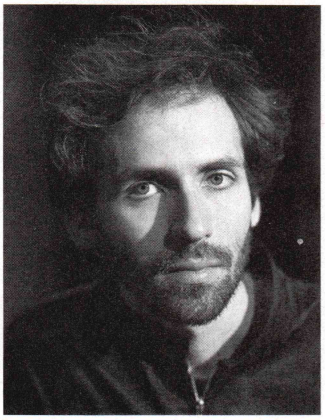
Composed: 1907

In concertgoing circles it's always the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto even though he wrote three of them, just as in piano recital circles it is the Rachmaninoff Sonata even though he wrote two. Vladimir Horowitz championed the Second Sonata for much of his career, and with such advocacy it is no wonder that the work achieved its enormous popularity. Tonight it is the unjustly neglected First Sonata that we hear.

Seeking a calm environment in which to compose, Rachmaninoff left the politicized infighting of the Russian musical scene and moved his family to Dresden late in 1906. There, over the following months, he completed his immense Second Symphony and his First Piano Sonata.

In communications with his colleagues, Rachmaninoff suggested both that he had been inspired by the Faust legend (the movements being portraits of Faust, Gretchen, and Mephistopheles), and that he considered expanding the sonata into a symphony. But the programmatic inclination eventually was abandoned, and while the music is certainly conceived with a sweeping orchestral palette in mind, the composer never undertook the transformation.

Gloriously, all the stylistic traits of Rachmaninoff's most beloved music are found here. The sinister and mysterious opening gives way to soaring passages redolent of hymns and the tolling of the bells of Russian Orthodox churches—a fixture in Rachmaninoff's compositions throughout his career. The unexpectedly tranquil ending of the first movement leads to the gentle Lento second movement, which is, like the Adagio of the Second Symphony, a consoling and passionate song without words, a melody that remains aloft and unfurling throughout. The virtuoso's imperatives come crashing back in the concluding Allegro molto. The mystery of the opening of the sonata is revisited, but dark resounding chords triumph, martial and incendiary. **—Grant Hiroshima**



ALEXANDRE KANTOROW

In 2019, at the age of 22, Alexandre Kantorow became the first French pianist to win the Gold Medal at the International Tchaikovsky Competition, along with the rarely awarded Grand Prix, granted only three times in the competition's history. In 2024, he was recognized once again when he received the esteemed Gilmore Artist Award, solidifying his place as one of the world's leading pianists. *Gramophone* has described him as "the real deal, a fire-breathing virtuoso with a poetic charm and innate stylistic mastery." He is in demand at the highest level across the globe, performing in the world's finest halls both in recital and with the most renowned orchestras and conductors.

Highlights of Kantorow's 2025/26 season include a tour of Japan with the Concertgebouw Orchestra and Klaus Mäkelä, European tours with the Filarmonica della Scala and Riccardo Chailly and with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Paavo Järvi, a tour of Asia with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Jaap van Zweden, and a tour of the US with the Philharmonia and Marin Alsop, which includes a performance at Carnegie Hall. He also embarks on a major recital tour of North America, makes his debut with the San Francisco Symphony, and returns to the Rotterdam Philharmonic and Bavarian Radio Symphony orchestras.

Kantorow performs in recital regularly across the globe in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Vienna Konzerthaus, London's Wigmore Hall, Philharmonie Paris, and Tokyo's Suntory Hall, and at festivals such as Edinburgh, Salzburg, La Roque d'Anthéron, Piano aux Jacobins, Verbier, Rheingau, and Klavierfest Ruhr. Chamber music is one of his great pleasures, and he performs regularly with artists such as Janine Jansen, Renaud Capuçon, Gautier Capuçon, and Matthias Goerne. With Liya Petrova and Aurélien Pascal he is co-artistic director of La Musikfest and Rencontres Musicales de Nîmes, and he is artistic director of the Pianopolis festival in Angers, France.

In recent seasons, Kantorow has performed with leading orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, and Budapest Festival orchestras and with conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Manfred Honeck, Iván Fischer, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and Antonio Pappano.

Alexandre Kantorow records exclusively for BIS. His recordings have received critical acclaim worldwide, and recently he was awarded the Gramophone Award in the Piano category for his Brahms and Schubert recording. In 2024, he was awarded the title of Chevalier of the National Order of Merit by the President of France, having previously been made a Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Minister of Culture. In July 2024, Kantorow performed Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* at the opening ceremony of the Paris Olympic Games.

Kantorow studied with Pierre-Alain Volondat, Igor Lazko, Frank Braley, and Rena Shereshevskaya.

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LA PHIL BROADCASTS ON CLASSICAL CALIFORNIA

Last month the LA Phil and Classical California announced an expansion of their annual radio broadcast partnership. In addition to the SoCal Saturday Night series, the LA Phil and Classical California have created a special series devoted to Music & Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel, commemorating his 17-year tenure with the orchestra.

The seven-episode series captures magical moments from Dudamel's 2025/26 season, including the world premiere of Ellen Reid's *Earth Between Oceans*, Mahler's epic Second Symphony, and Thomas Adès' *Inferno* from *Dante* with the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Airing Sundays at 2pm starting April 19, the series culminates in two live broadcasts of Los Angeles Philharmonic performances from Walt Disney Concert Hall on May 31 and June 7.

The SoCal Saturday Night series features a selection of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's performances with an impressive roster of guest artists and conductors from throughout the 2025/26 season, showcasing an eclectic repertoire that includes Busoni's towering piano concerto with soloist Igor Levit, Elgar's *Enigma Variations* conducted by Roberto González-Monjas, and a dance-themed program culminating in Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with conductor Elim Chan. The remaining episodes of the SoCal Saturday Night series feature replays from the all-Dudamel series. Each concert will also be streamed for 14 days, on demand at the Classical California website, immediately following its initial broadcast. Through the organizations' ongoing partnership with WFMT and the WFMT Radio Network, the 2026 SoCal Saturday Night broadcast series will also be syndicated nationwide.

Highlights from both series include performances (in order of air date) by noted soloists Emanuel Ax, piano; Sheku Kanneh-Mason, cello; Renaud Capuçon, violin; Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha, soprano; Chen Reiss, soprano, and Beth Taylor, mezzo-soprano; and Anthony León, tenor, and Gustavo Castillo, baritone.

In addition to concerts conducted by Dudamel, broadcasts feature guest conductors (in order of air date) Matthias Pintscher, Roberto González-Monjas, Gustavo Gimeno, Thomas Wilkins, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Elim Chan. The series, hosted by Classical California's Brian Lauritzen, features interviews with soloists and orchestra members, offering unique insights and giving listeners a more in-depth perspective.

For complete details, please visit **laphil.com/radio**.

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SHEKU-KANNEH MASON

UPCOMING BROADCASTS

SoCal Saturday Nights at 7pm

APRIL 4
Matthias Pintscher, conductor; **Emanuel Ax,** piano

RAVEL	*Mother Goose* Suite
Matthias PINTSCHER	*neharot*
MOZART	Piano Concerto No. 25
RAVEL	*La valse*

APRIL 11
Roberto González-Monjas, conductor
Sheku Kanneh-Mason, cello

KORNGOLD	Theme and Variations
Edmund FINNIS	Cello Concerto
ELGAR	*Enigma Variations*

APRIL 18
Gustavo Gimeno, conductor; **Renaud Capuçon,** violin

LIGETI	*Concert Românesc*
MOZART	Violin Concerto No. 3
SIBELIUS	Symphony No. 1

APRIL 25
Thomas Wilkins, conductor

Carlos SIMON	*Four Black American Dances*
ELLINGTON	*The Nutcracker* Suite
TCHAIKOVSKY	Symphony No. 1, "Winter Daydreams"

MAY 2
Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor; **Igor Levit,** piano
Los Angeles Master Chorale
Grant Gershon, Artistic Director
Jenny Wong, Associate Artistic Director

BUSONI	Piano Concerto

MAY 9
Elim Chan, conductor
Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha, soprano

RAVEL	*Le tombeau de Couperin*
BARTÓK	Dance Suite
MAHLER	Symphony No. 4

LA Phil Broadcasts on Classical California are made possible through the endowed LA Phil Broadcast Program Fund, generously supported by the Lenore S. and Bernard A. Greenberg Fund.

Dudamel Series Sundays at 2pm and Saturdays at 7pm

APRIL 26 & MAY 16
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor
Los Angeles Master Chorale
Grant Gershon, Artistic Director
Jenny Wong, Associate Artistic Director

Ellen REID	*Earth Between Oceans*
R. STRAUSS	*An Alpine Symphony*

MAY 3 & 23
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

John ADAMS	*Frenzy: a short symphony*
STRAVINSKY	*The Firebird* Suite (1919 version)
STRAVINSKY	*The Rite of Spring*

MAY 10 & 30
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor
Chen Reiss, soprano; **Beth Taylor,** mezzo-soprano
Los Angeles Master Chorale
Grant Gershon, Artistic Director
Jenny Wong, Associate Artistic Director

MAHLER	Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection"

MAY 17 & JUNE 6
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

Ricardo LORENZ	*Humboldt's Nature*
BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 7

MAY 24 & JUNE 13
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 6, "Pastoral"
Thomas ADÈS	*Inferno* from *Dante*

MAY 31 & JUNE 20
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

Roberto SIERRA	*Estudios sinfónicos*
R. STRAUSS	*Ein Heldenleben*

JUNE 7 & 27
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor
Anthony León, tenor; **Gustavo Castillo,** baritone
Los Angeles Master Chorale
Grant Gershon, Artistic Director
Jenny Wong, Associate Artistic Director

John ADAMS	*Harmonium*
ESTÉVEZ	*Cantata Criolla*

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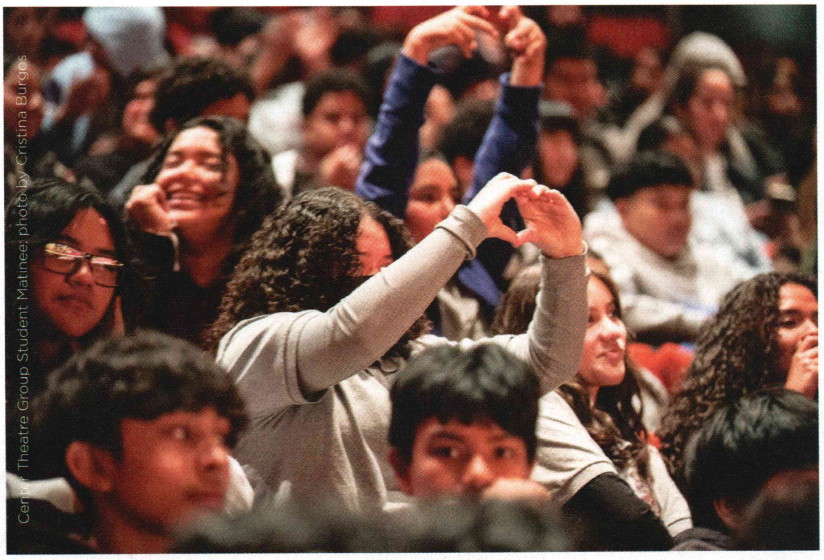

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Chavela y Sus Mujeres
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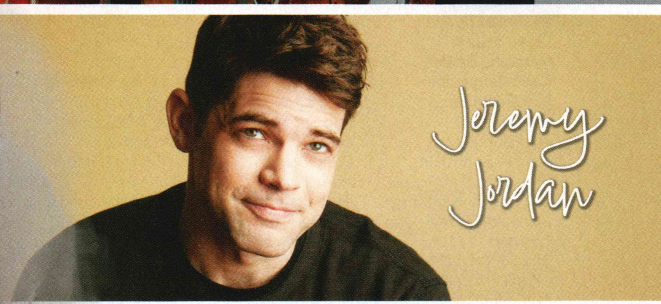

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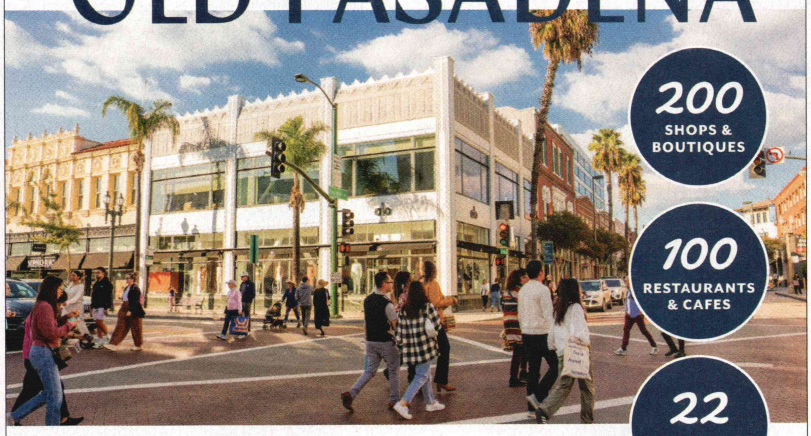

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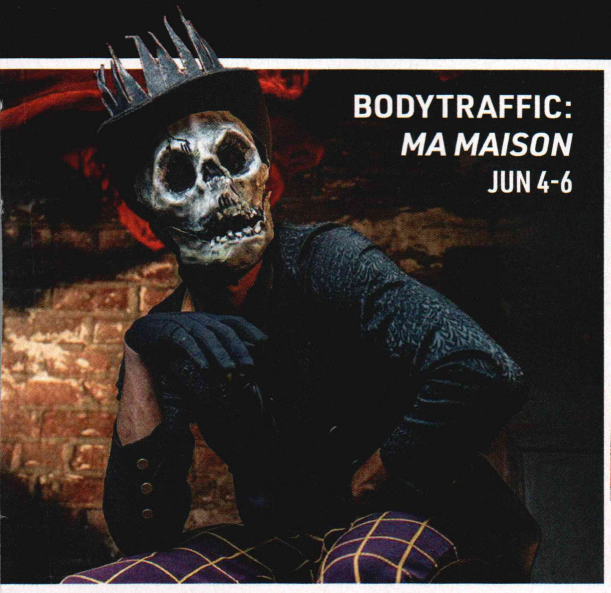

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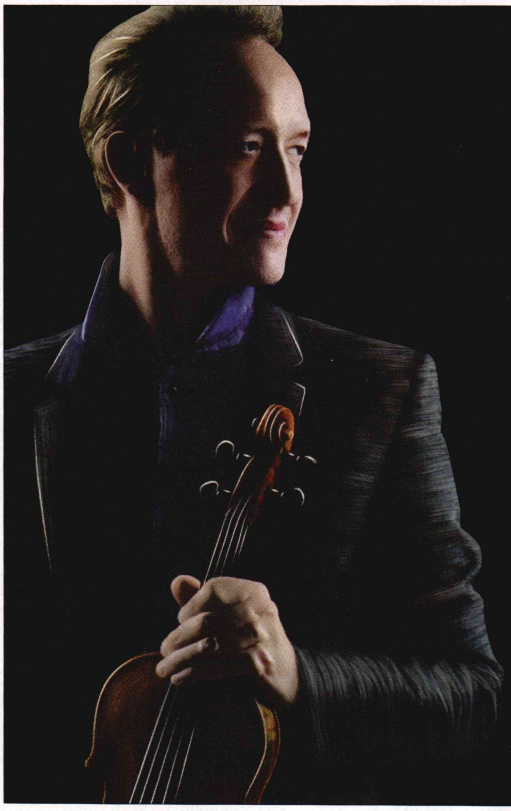

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Christopher Cerrone, Double Concerto for Violin & Cello
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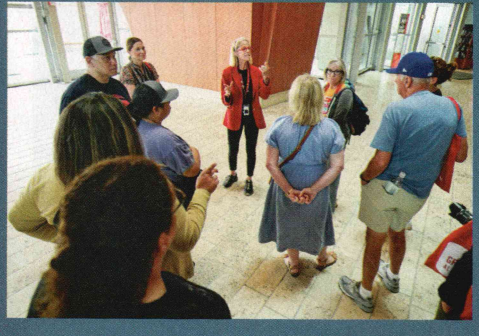

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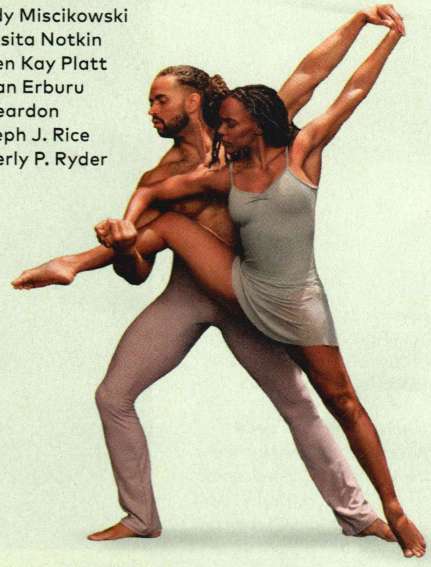

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's James Gilmer and Samantha Figgins. Photo by Andrew Eccles.

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As a steward of The Music Center of Los Angeles County, we recognize that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh and Chumash Peoples. We honor and pay respect to their elders and descendants—past, present and emerging—as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We acknowledge that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide and multigenerational trauma. This acknowledgment demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing and reconciliation and to elevating the stories, culture and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these ancestral lands. We are dedicated to growing and sustaining relationships with Native peoples and local tribal governments, including (in no particular order) the:

- Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
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To learn more about the First Peoples of Los Angeles County, please visit the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission website at lanaic.lacounty.go

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APRIL 2026

WED 1 APR / 7:30 p.m.
Kim's Convenience
CENTER THEATRE GROUP
@ Ahmanson Theatre
Thru 4/19/26

WED 1 APR / 7:30 p.m.
Here Lies Love
CENTER THEATRE GROUP
@ Mark Taper Forum
Thru 4/5/2026

THU 2 APR / 8:00 p.m.
Tchaikovsky & Haydn
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall
Thru 4/4/2026

SAT 4 APR / 2:00 p.m.
Los Angeles Children's Chorus
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall

FRI 10 APR / 8:00 p.m.
Turangalîa
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall
Thru 4/12/2026

TUE 14 APR / 8:00 p.m.
Herbie Hancock
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall

FRI 17 APR / 8:00 p.m.
Shostakovich & Sibelius
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall
Thru 4/19/2026

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SAT 18 APR / 11:00 a.m.
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CENTER THEATRE GROUP
Presented in partnership with MUSE/IQUE
@ Mark Taper Forum
Thru 4/26/2026

SAT 18 APR / 7:30 p.m.
Falstaff
LA OPERA
@ Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
Thru 5/10/2026

SUN 19 APR / 7:00 p.m.
Mozart's Requiem
LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall

TUE 21 APR / 8:00 p.m.
Beethoven & Schumann
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall

FRI 24 APR / 7:00 p.m.
James Conlon Farewell Concert
LA OPERA
@ Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

FRI 24 APR / 8:00 p.m.
Ichiko Aoba
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall

SAT 25 APR / 8:00 p.m.
John Adams & Víkingur Ólafsson
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall
Thru 4/26/2026

TUE 28 APR / 8:00 p.m.
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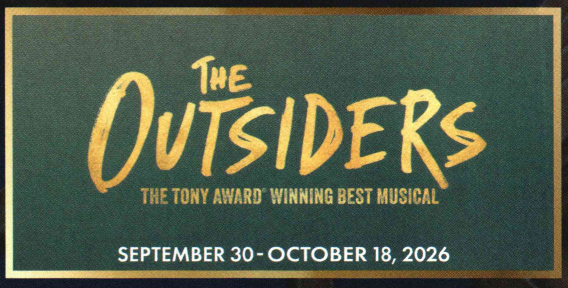

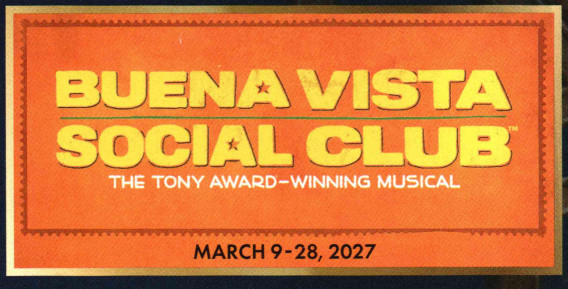

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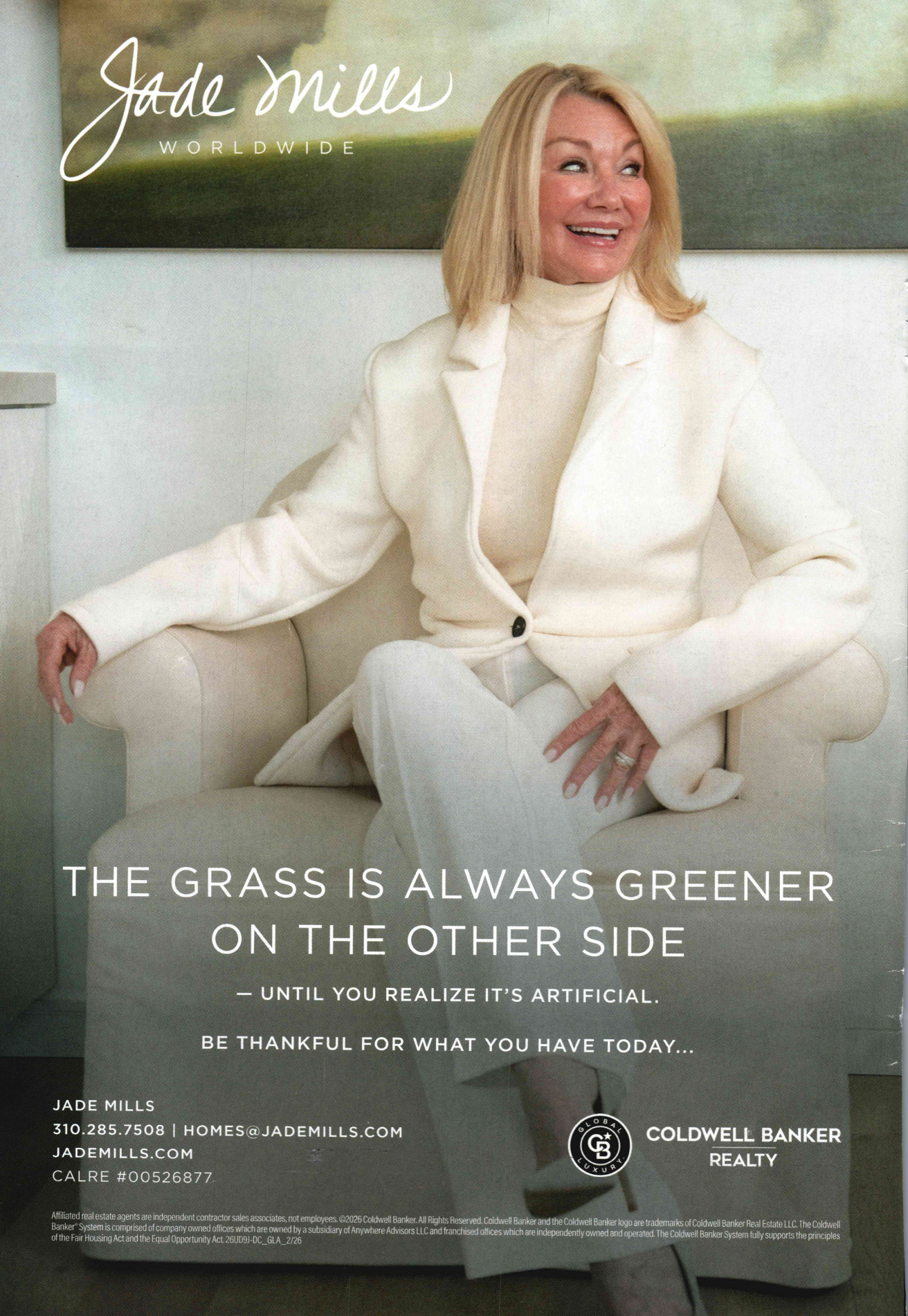
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